EIGHT PAGE EXTRA

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by William Willis

Another amazing true-life adventure by the author of THE SEVEN LITTLE SISTERS

*Week ending October 5 1957* *Every Wednesday Fourpence*

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# JOHN BULL

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CHANCERY 3344 OCTOBER 5, 1957 VOLUME 102 NUMBER 2675


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## REPORT FROM THE EDITOR

*After an epic voyage, William Willis greets his wife Teddy*

WILLIAM WILLIS set out to rescue a convict—and ended by getting married. He met his wife on a ship travelling through the Caribbean to British Guiana. "Teddy, a girl from New York, was in the theatrical business and had taken a few months off for a cruise. When we parted in Georgetown she said, 'Let me come with you into the jungle, Bill.' I replied, 'Not on this trip. Next time, perhaps.' "

So Teddy stayed aboard ship and Willis headed for Devil's Island. He tells the story of his amazing adventures there in our special eight-page feature, *Rescue From Devil's Island*. As soon as he had cleared customs on his return to New York, Willis went to a telephone, called Teddy and proposed. They were married soon afterwards.

But Teddy didn't go on his next big trip. He did that alone. It was his famous crossing of the Pacific in The Seven Little Sisters—a raft made of seven balsa logs—from Peru to Samoa, with only a cat and a parrot for company. The voyage lasted 115 days and covered nearly seven thousand miles. Tragedy marred it on the 113th day—the cat, Meekie, killed the parrot, Eekie.

Since his marriage Willis has concentrated on writing—"though off and on I go to sea to keep myself fit." He wrote the story of the Seven Little Sisters and has also had poetry published.

Born in Hamburg sixty-four years ago, Willis went to sea in sailing ships when he was fifteen, and then took the first steps to becoming an American citizen by jumping ship in Texas.

Since then he has been a docker, lumberjack, ranch hand, seaman, oilfield worker, road labourer, gold prospector, miner and, at times, simply a hobo. "Always hard labour," he says. "This I seemed to need like the air I breathed." Wherever chance took him he would sit in libraries studying literature "with a hunger only equalled by my zest for action."

LIKE Clem in her story, *Way Of The Country*, which begins on page 28, Elspeth Huxley dislikes killing animals. Years ago Kenya, the story's setting, was popular with hunters, but now much of the wild life is protected.

Mrs. Huxley spent her childhood in Kenya. In 1911 her parents went to settle there, and five-year-old Elspeth followed them out a year later. The land they took was undeveloped bush on the edge of Kikuyu country which could be reached only by ox cart. For a long time the settlers had to live in grass huts.

Elspeth Huxley went to school in Nairobi, but left Kenya when she was eighteen to study at Reading University and Cornell University, U.S.A. During the war she worked for the B.B.C., and now frequently broadcasts book reviews on *The Critics*.

She returns to Kenya as often as possible to see her mother, who still runs a farm there. In England she also takes a hand on the land—helping her husband on a 150-acre dairy farm in Wiltshire. "It's pretty tame compared with Kenya," she says. "But we've got a bull which is probably fiercer than most lions."

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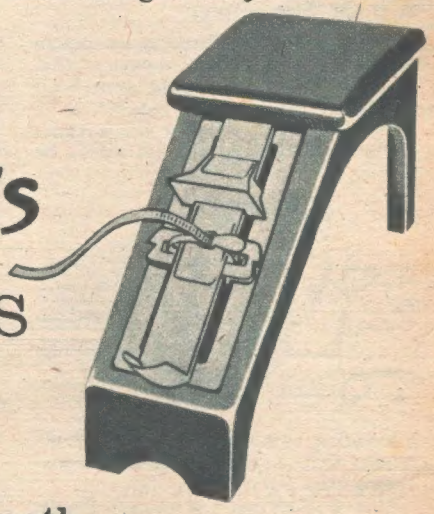

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# Free Speech

- **Dress sense keeps you warm in winter**
- **Why animals must go into quarantine**
- **Danger in the blackberry bush**

ANY man who wears a business suit and bowler hat between now and next March is by definition an idiot.

In every respect, the British are completely unprepared for cold weather, but the most startling example of winter stupidity is the attitude of the average Briton going to work.

He wears a hard, comfortless hat that leaves his ears exposed to snow and wind; he covers his back with a thick overcoat, and leaves a large part of his chest covered only by a shirt. His gloves are designed to facilitate folding his newspaper rather than keeping out the cold, and his trousers seem expressly designed to encourage the circulation of wind round his ankles.

I'm going to work this winter in flying boots, a seaman's sweater and a balaclava helmet. Surely my boss will prefer that to my annual three weeks off for flu.—W. E. J., Surrey.

*"Because hot air rises kilts are always warm," says a doctor. "Wool is the best material for cold weather. The ideal winter garment is a long polo sweater sealed at the wrists and neck and loose everywhere else. The more layers of clothing there are the more layers of air, and the warmer you are. Four thin layers are always warmer than three thick ones."*

## Plan For A House

I have yet to see a pair of semi-detached houses which are not built with the living-rooms together in the centre, and the halls, bathrooms and kitchens at the end. If the neighbours throw a party or turn up the radio the people next door are obliged to share it.

Reverse the plan and what do you get? Detachment of the living quarters and a simplified plumbing lay-out, for all the mains and drains are grouped together in the centre.—GEOFFREY TAYLOR, Halifax, Yorks.

*"The houses Mr. Taylor complains about are usually designed and built by speculative builders, who find it easier to build that way," says an official of the Royal Institute of British Architects. "But architects are at last successfully persuading builders to put the living quarters on the outside of the house, in spite of the small technical details involved."*

## Aid Of The Party

My wife was a shorthand typist before we married, and I have always scoffed at the idea that typing was hard work.

But I recently bought her a typewriter, and decided that it would be

interesting to learn myself, fully confident that I would master touch-typing in a few weeks.

How I've changed my tune! I only have to type a few lines and my wrists, arms and back ache. And I am used to heavy work.—A. BARBER, Burns Street, Northampton.

*"It is a common fallacy that a typist works as hard as a dock labourer," says a typewriter expert. "In fact, I calculate that an average typist, typing fifty letters a day, uses about 1,300 foot-pounds of energy, or as much energy as she would expend on two visits to the cloakroom to powder her nose."*

## Germans Revived

I don't know what part of Western Germany A. Lumsden visited during his holiday ("Free Speech," September 14), but I was in Germany from 1946 to 1948 and saw the devastation of a defeated nation. A tour of Germany a year ago was a revelation.

It was impossible to sleep after 6 a.m. because of the noise of rebuilding. Factories, flats and magnificent shops were standing where once there had been only rubble, and more were going up. And the shops were filled with good-quality, imaginative goods.

In their new factories the Germans are hard at work to attract world buyers, and their achievements are making them a proud nation. So take heed, Britons. We are not setting the pace. We, too, must work hard if we are to make a living.—MRS. GRACE CANN, Nascot Wood Road, Watford, Herts.

## Barbed Weeds

I, too, regard blackberries as "noxious weeds," as do the New Zealanders ("The Cover," August 31).

When my father took over his farm in Scotland, brambles formed a canopy over all the drainage ditches. The number of sheep, particularly young animals heavy with wool, caught by these "barbed octopi" and drowned as they struggled in vain, was sickening.

All sheep farmers and, indeed, all good farmers will agree with the New Zealanders' verdict on the blackberry bush.—G. A. PEARCE, Alstonfield, Ashbourne, Derbyshire.

*"Blackberry bushes are certainly regarded with disfavour by farmers," says a National Farmers' Union official. "Left unchecked, the bushes would soon become a menace to sheep. Farmers usually cut back the brambles and keep them down as part of their winter fencing and hedging programme."*

## Delivering The Goods

My husband and I are still collecting our home. These are our experiences so far.

Our dining table, promised within two weeks, arrived four weeks later. A bureau promised immediately arrived after three weeks. Carpets which were thought to be in stock were in another shop miles away, and could not be delivered without delay.

We were thrilled at the immediate arrival of the vacuum cleaner and the radiogram, but our enthusiasm waned when they first had to be adjusted and then repaired before giving any sort of service. And the gas cooker's faulty thermostat only became apparent after I had burned the cakes.—MRS. J. ALEXANDER, Bexleyheath, Kent.

## Travelling Dogs

In these days of advanced medical technique it seems absurd that a dog arriving in this country should have to spend six months in quarantine.

Surely it is not beyond the powers of a vet to give an animal a good examination and pass it fit or otherwise. It would look well if doctors were so out of date that human beings had to go into quarantine when travelling from one country to another.—L. H. GRAVES, James Street, Markham, Blackwood, Mon.

*"Dogs are kept in quarantine because they may be carrying rabies," says a Ministry of Agriculture spokesman. "It is absolutely impossible for a vet to detect this disease before it breaks out. We have had dogs in quarantine which have shown rabies symptoms in the sixth month. We have kept them on a little longer and rabies has been confirmed."*

## Into Space With B.R.

My uncle has the misfortune to require a wheelchair, and hesitated on that account before visiting his daughter in London. One day they planned a trip to the botanical gardens at Kew, and the railway staff gave them every possible help with the chair at Clapham Junction station.

But on reaching Kew they were surprised to hear a loudspeaker announcement asking the whereabouts of the gentleman with the wheelchair. Apparently word had been telephoned from Clapham that such a traveller would be glad of assistance.

I'm not concerned with the merits or otherwise of nationalisation, but employees with such a spirit of service

would make a success of a travel system under interplanetary control.—WILLIAM HODGSON, Eamont Gardens, West Hartlepool, Co. Durham.

## Playing With Food

Our starry-eyed nutritionists busily totting up food values in their laboratories are debunked time and time again. But it doesn't stop them trying to mess about with our eating habits. Even when a campaign is launched in support of one foodstuff or another it isn't because it's particularly good for us but because there's a glut.

The propaganda-inspired fallacy that raw carrots improve eyesight was exposed years ago. Spinach and yeast and other fad foods have lost their appeal—and even the exaggerated worship of vitamins is dying out because nobody really knows how many the body absorbs from any particular food.

Experiments have shown that whenever children, animals or savages are allowed free choice from a wide selection of foods they prosper as well as, if not better than, groups put on "scientifically balanced" diets. So there is still only one sure guide to the diet needs of a healthy individual: "Eat what you like when you want it."—T. R., Bristol.

## Back To D-Day

Your picture of the Coppists cheering on the D-Day landing troops (JOHN BULL, September 14) brought back vivid memories to me.

I was one of the men assaulting the beaches that day, and as our landing craft raced towards the shore I felt very much afraid, and crouched as low as possible in the bottom of the boat.

Suddenly we heard the sound of British voices raised in a cheer. Cautiously we raised our heads. Not fifty yards away was a midget submarine, with its crew waving and shouting like madmen. We were so astonished that, forgetting possible dangers, we stood up and waved back.

The sight of those men, who must have been Harbud, Hudspeth and Clark, was a real morale booster.—W. GORE, West Street, Newbury, Berks.

## Canteen Incident

The tranquillity of our canteen lunch was shattered the other day by a violent explosion. An ordinary glass tumbler containing iced lemonade had been standing undisturbed on a nearby table for ten minutes when, for no apparent reason, it shattered into fragments which spread over a radius of eight feet.

The weather was mild, the room temperature was quite normal, and although there were many tumblers of similar design in the vicinity only this one was affected.—JOHN MCADAM, London, N.W.2.

*"Glass is a super-cooled liquid, and during the manufacturing process all sorts of internal strains can be locked up in a tumbler," says an expert. "Certain conditions, such as a knock or a jar, or a sudden change of temperature, may release the strains and cause the tumbler to crack, break, or even—in rare instances—to explode violently."*

## Old War Teeth

Isn't it about time that all the old "dragon's teeth" dotted about all over the East Coast were removed? In the next war there will obviously be no sense in placing them in position, so they are being left to disfigure our roads and front gardens unnecessarily.

If the high cost of labour involved in removing them is the cause of their being left lying about, why not recruit some voluntary labour to do the job?—W. R., Wallington, Surrey.

*"The War Department is not responsible for the removal of defence works when they are no longer required," says a War Office spokesman. "It meets its liability by paying statutory compensation to the owner of the land concerned. If this is insufficient to enable the owner to*

*remove the work, he may apply to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government for a grant. If the Ministry consider that it would be in the national interest for the work to be removed and the site restored, a grant is given to the land owner concerned to enable him to do so."*

## See Red—And Rush

If the authorities did universally introduce crossings with push-button controls ("Free Speech," August 31), I hope suitable fines would be imposed on all the pedestrians who insisted on crossing the road while the lights were red.

In Bristol several such crossings

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

# Easy ways to do it yourself

**In this valuable "Do-It-Yourself" feature are all kinds of products which will help you to brighten and improve your home, and save money as well. You don't have to be an expert to do these do-it-yourself jobs, as the advertisers will gladly show you if you write now for their leaflets and booklets.**


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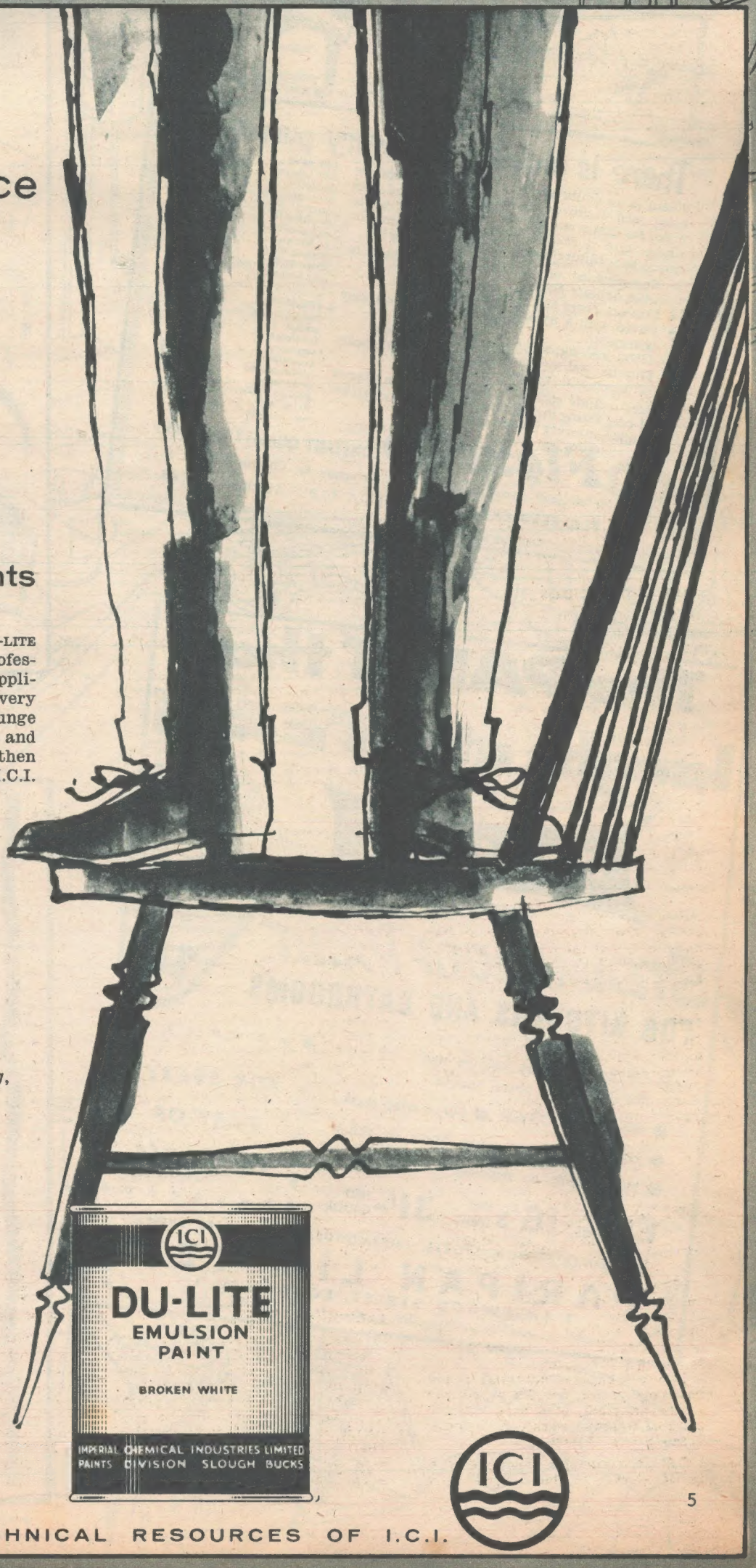


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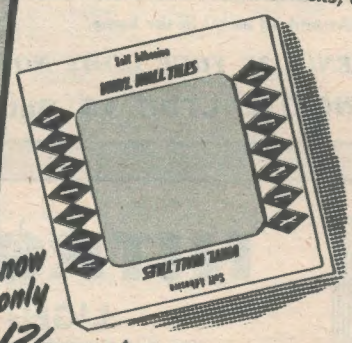

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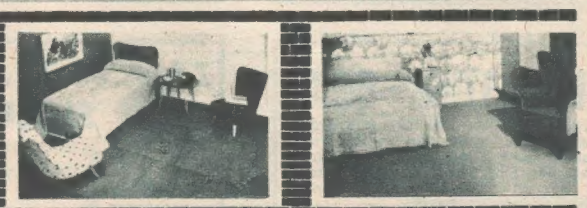

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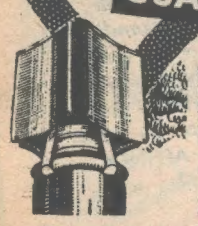

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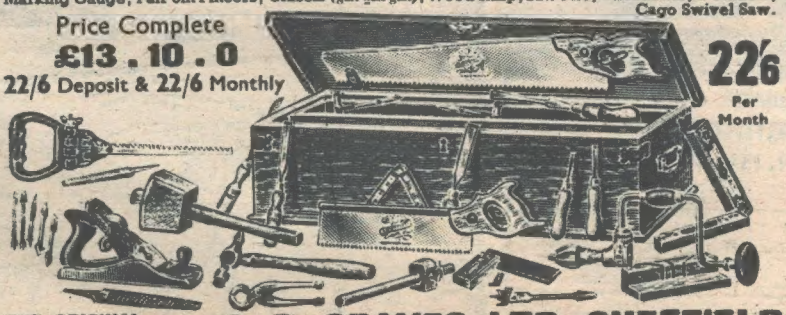

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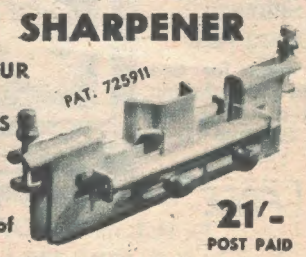


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# Free Speech

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

have been installed in the city centre, almost guaranteeing the pedestrian complete safety in crossing roads. Yet in five minutes at one crossing I counted forty-two people who skipped in and out of the traffic while the lights were still against them, and at another crossing over a similar period of time another seventeen ignored the lights.

At five shillings a fine, it wouldn't take long to recover the costs of installation.—J. W., Bristol.

## The Fare Sexes

When two men sit together on a bus it is almost certain that one will pay both fares.

Not so with women. Several times I have seen two of them chatting together, obviously on the best of terms. But when the conductor arrived each woman paid her own fare.

Why the difference? Are men more

generous, or do women have more sense?—W. R. Bowies, High Street, Brora, Sutherlandshire.

*"There is no question of meanness involved here," says a psychologist. "The price of another man's fare would mean little to a man out of what he allows himself to spend each week. But a woman would think of the threepence or fourpence involved as coming from the money she has to keep her family."*

## Shocking Traps

The failure of the electric mousetrap ("Shock Treatment for Your Home," John Bull, August 31) does not surprise me at all. At an R.A.F. transmitting station during the war I unsuccessfully attempted to trap mice with a device basically similar to the one described.

The trap consisted of a small tin resting on a piece of wood having a base of sheet metal. The whole apparatus was surmounted by the traditional piece of cheese. In the course of experiments, whenever the current was switched off the mouse would take the bait, but never when the trap was live. Mice would appear to be sensitive to the vibrations set up by alternating current.—D. S., Edinburgh.

*"We would not dismiss the assumption that mice can detect electricity," says an official of the Electrical Development Association. "Two members of the staff of our Association have made two different kinds of electric mouse-trap—and neither of them caught a mouse."*

## All In A Line

Not until I took a job which entailed travelling by bus from town to town did I realize that one of the good things left over from the war years was the queue.

It does not require much imagination to see what a nightmare modern town life would be without it.

My mother often used to tell me how she hated going to the theatre as a girl and waiting in a huge crowd which, as soon as the doors were opened, would start swaying back and forth alarmingly. It was not uncommon for women to be trampled on before they got inside. Thank goodness that the queue helps us to behave like civilized people.—Miss Elsie Rodin, Victoria Park, Manchester, 4.

## Responsibility In Sight

The ban in some jobs on men who wear spectacles is not so stupid ("Free Speech," September 14). R.A.F. pilots, policemen and Merchant Navy deck officers all have other people's lives in their keeping, and a momentary loss of vision in their work might be fatal for someone.

With all respect to Sidney Wooderson and Chris Brasher, we have the best pilots, policemen and referees in the world—but I'm afraid that we do not have the best athletes.—James Murray, Buckie, Banffshire.

## Vacant Possession

Travelling along the by-pass road from Helsby to Queensferry on my way to North Wales, I was surprised to see, on the main road near Queensferry, scores of houses and numerous other buildings, which I believe were part of an American air force base, standing empty.

In this time of a national housing shortage surely the authorities of that district could make some use of these houses. —T. Turner, Weston Street, Atherton, Manchester.

*"These buildings are on Sealand Aerodrome, and are our property," says the Air Ministry. "The United States Air Force, to whom they were leased, vacated them only a few weeks ago, and the future of the base is still under consideration."*

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**John Bull pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech," and at the usual rates for photographs. Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to the John Bull Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post**

# THE COVER

Petrol . . . oil . . . battery . . . tyres . . . *tyres!* This seems to be just the place where they deal with the vicissitudes that beset pretty young ladies with prams. And he looks such a nice man—such a confident air for a quick repair job. After all, says artist Wood, you wouldn't expect the proud little parent to know that the garage man's look masks a most interesting opinion of women with transport problems. Soon, however, his heart will melt. For what man wouldn't halt the traffic for a damsel in distress? Petrol . . . oil . . . battery . . . tyres. . . .

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*Death travelled by train. . . . Beginning an exciting new mystery thriller*

# 4·50 FROM PADDINGTON

by AGATHA CHRISTIE

MRS. MCGILLICUDDY panted along the platform in the wake of the porter carrying her suitcase. The porter was tall and free-striding and Mrs. McGillicuddy was short and stout. She felt consequently full of relief when at last she was comfortably installed in solitary splendour in a first-class compartment.

Mrs. McGillicuddy settled herself back on the plush cushions with a sigh and opened a magazine. Five minutes later whistles blew and the train started. The magazine slipped from Mrs. McGillicuddy's hand and her head dropped sideways. She slept for thirty-five minutes and awoke refreshed. Resettling her hat which had slipped askew, she sat up and looked out of the window at what she could see of the flying countryside.

It was quite dark now, a dreary, misty December day—Christmas was only five days ahead. London had been dark and dreary; the country was no less so, though occasionally rendered cheerful with its clusters of lights as

**Mrs. McGillicuddy drew in a gasp. In the carriage only a few feet away, a woman was being slowly strangled**

ILLUSTRATED BY K. J. PETTS

the train went flashing on through towns and stations.

A train travelling in the opposite direction rushed by with a screech, making the windows rattle and causing her to start. Mrs. McGillicuddy's train clattered over points and passed through a station. Then it began suddenly to slow down, presumably in obedience to a signal. For some minutes it crawled along, then stopped, then presently it began to move forward again.

At that moment another train, also on a down line, swerved inwards towards them, for a moment with almost alarming effect. For a time the two trains ran parallel, now one gaining a little, now the other.

Mrs. McGillicuddy looked from her window through the windows of the parallel carriages. Most of the blinds were down, but occasionally the occupants of the carriages were visible. The other train was not very full and there were many empty carriages.

At that moment when the two trains gave the illusion of being stationary, a blind in one of the carriages flew up with a snap. Mrs. McGillicuddy looked into the lighted carriage that was only a few feet away.

Then she drew her breath in with a gasp and half-rose to her feet. Standing with his back half-turned to the window and to her was a man. His hands were round the throat of a woman who faced him, and he was slowly, remorselessly strangling her. Her eyes were starting from their sockets, and her face was purple and congested.

As Mrs. McGillicuddy watched, fascinated, the end came. The body went limp and crumpled in the man's hands. At the same moment Mrs. McGillicuddy's train slowed down again and the other began to gain speed. A moment or two later it had vanished from sight.

Almost automatically Mrs. McGillicuddy's hand went up to the communication cord, then paused, irresolute. After all, what use would it be ringing the cord of the train in which *she* was travelling? The horror of what she had seen at such close quarters, and the unusual circumstances, made her feel paralysed. *Some* immediate action was necessary—but what?

The door of her compartment was drawn back and a ticket collector came in and said: "Ticket, please."

Mrs. McGillicuddy turned to him with vehemence. "A woman has been strangled," she said. "In a train that has just passed. I saw it."

The ticket collector looked extremely doubtful. "Strangled?" he said disbelievingly.

"Yes, *strangled*! I saw it, I tell you. You must do something at once."

"You don't think, madam, that you may have had a little nap and—er—" The ticket collector broke off tactfully.

"I have had a nap, but if you think this was a dream, you're quite wrong. I *saw* it, I tell you. And what I want to know is, what are you going to do about it?"

"Well, madam. . . ."

"You're going to do *something*, I suppose?"

The ticket collector sighed and glanced at his watch. "We shall be in Brackhampton in seven minutes. I'll report what you've told me. In what direction was the train you mention going?"

"This direction, of course," said Mrs. McGillicuddy. "You don't suppose I'd have been able to see all this if a train had flashed past going in the other direction?"

The ticket collector looked as though he thought Mrs. McGillicuddy was quite capable of seeing anything anywhere as the fancy took her. But he remained polite.

"You can rely on me, madam," he said. "I will report your statement. Perhaps I might have your name and address—just in case. . . ."

Mrs. McGillicuddy gave him the address where she would be staying for the next few days and her permanent address in Scotland, and he wrote them down. Then he withdrew with the air of a man who has done his duty and dealt successfully with a tiresome member of the travelling public.

With a sigh, Mrs. McGillicuddy leaned back. Well, she had done what she could. Her mind went back to the scene she had witnessed. Horrible, quite horrible. . . . She was a strong-nerved woman, but she shivered. What a strange—what a fantastic thing to happen to her, Elspeth McGillicuddy! If the blind of that carriage had not happened to fly up. . . .

But that, of course, was providence. Providence had willed that she, Elspeth McGillicuddy, should be a witness of the crime. Her lips set grimly. . . .

An hour and five minutes later the train reached Milchester and Mrs. McGillicuddy found a taxi waiting to take her to St. Mary Mead.

It was a nine-mile drive. Sitting bolt upright in the car, Mrs. McGillicuddy was unable to relax. Her feelings yearned for expression. At last the taxi drove along the familiar village street and finally drew up at its destination; Mrs. McGillicuddy got out and walked up the brick path to the door. The driver deposited her cases inside as the door was opened by an elderly maid. Mrs. McGillicuddy passed straight through the hall to where, at the open sitting-room door, her hostess awaited her; an elderly frail old lady.

"Elspeth!"

"Jane!"

They kissed and, without preamble or circumlocution, Mrs. McGillicuddy burst into speech. "Oh, Jane!" she wailed. "I've just seen a murder."

TRUE to the precepts handed down to her by her mother and grandmother—to wit, that a true lady can neither be shocked nor surprised—Miss Marple merely raised her eyebrows and shook her head, as she said: "*Most* distressing for you, Elspeth, and surely most unusual. I think you had better tell me about it *at once*."

That was exactly what Mrs. McGillicuddy wanted to do. Allowing her hostess to draw her nearer to the fire, she sat down, pulled off her gloves and plunged immediately into a vivid narrative.

Miss Marple listened with close attention. When Mrs. McGillicuddy at last paused for breath, Miss Marple spoke with decision.

"The best thing, I think, my dear, is for you to go upstairs and take off your hat and have a wash. Then we will have supper—during which we will not discuss this *at all*. After supper we can go into the matter thoroughly and discuss it from every aspect."

Mrs. McGillicuddy concurred with this suggestion. The two ladies had supper, discussing, as they ate, various aspects of life as lived in the village of St. Mary Mead, and each other's gardens.

"Peonies," said Miss Marples as she rose from table, "are most unaccountable. Either they do—or they don't do. But if they *do* establish themselves, they are with you for life, so to speak, and really most beautiful varieties nowadays."

They settled themselves by the fire again, and Miss Marple brought out two old Waterford glasses from a corner cupboard, and from another cupboard produced a bottle.

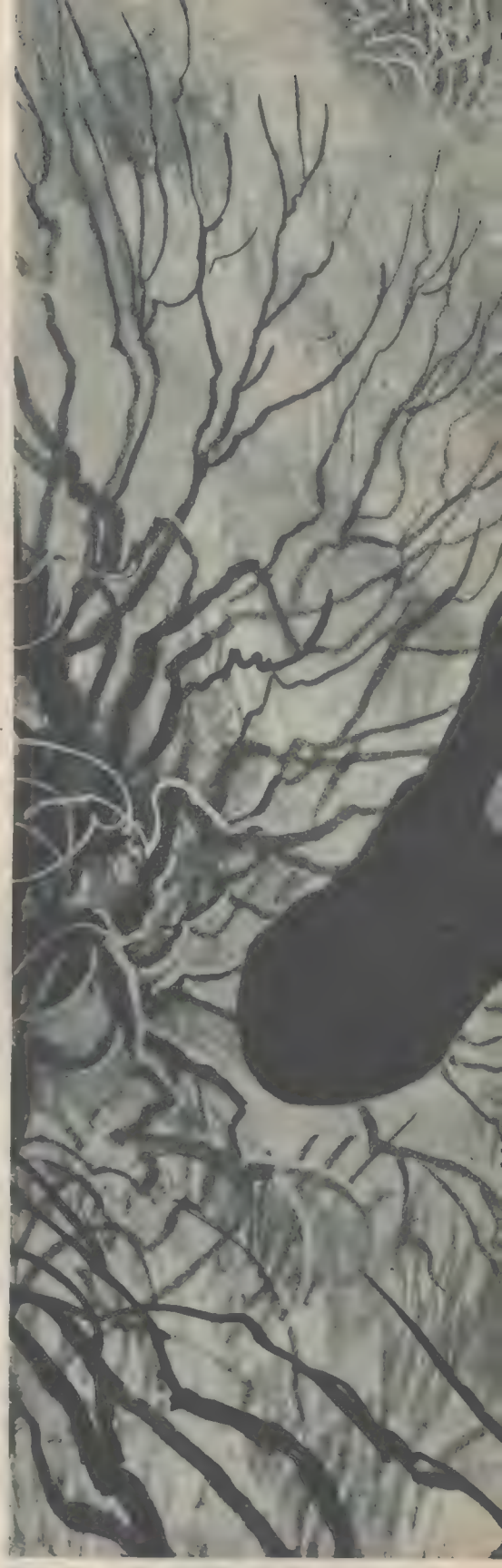
"No coffee tonight for you, Elspeth," she said. "You are already over-excited and probably would not sleep. I prescribe a glass of my cowslip wine, and later, perhaps, a cup of camomile tea."

"Jane;" said Mrs. McGillicuddy, as she took an appreciative sip, "*you* don't think, do you, that I dreamed it, or imagined it?"

"Certainly not," said Miss Marple with warmth.

Mrs. McGillicuddy heaved a sigh of relief. "That ticket collector," she said, "*he* thought so. Quite polite, but all the same. . . ."

"I think, Elspeth, that that was quite natural under the circumstances. It sounded—and



Lucy hunted carefully in the grass at the

indeed was—a most unlikely story. And you were a complete stranger to him. No, I have no doubt at all that you saw what you've told me you saw. . . . The man had his back to you, you say, so you didn't see his face?"

"No, not really."

"And the woman? You can describe her? Young, old?"

"Youngish. Between thirty and thirty-five, I should think. I couldn't say closer than that."

"Good-looking?"

"That, again, I couldn't say. Her face, you see, was all contorted and——"

Miss Marple said quickly: "Yes, yes, I quite understand. How was she dressed?"

"She had on a fur coat of some kind, a palish fur. No hat. Her hair was blonde."

"And there was nothing distinctive that you can remember about the man?"

Mrs. McGillicuddy took a little time to think carefully before she replied.

"He was tallish—and dark, I think. He had a heavy coat on so that I couldn't judge his

foot of the embankment, and found a small powder compact. She wrapped it in her handkerchief

build very well." She added despondently: "It's not really very much to go on."

"It's something," said Miss Marple. She paused. "You feel quite sure, in your own mind, that the girl was dead?"

"She was dead, I'm sure of it. Her tongue came out and—I'd rather not talk about it. . . ."

"Of course not," said Miss Marple quickly. "We shall know more, I expect, in the morning."

"In the morning?"

"I should imagine it will be in the morning papers. After this man had attacked and killed her, he would have a body on his hands. What would he do? Presumably he would leave the train quickly at the first station—by the way, can you remember if it was a corridor carriage?"

"No, it was not."

"That seems to point to a train that was not going far afield. It would almost certainly stop at Brackhampton. Let us say he leaves the train at Brackhampton, perhaps arranging the body in a corner seat, with the face hidden by the fur collar to delay discovery. Yes—I think that that is what he would do. But of course it will be discovered before very long—and I should imagine that the news of a murdered woman discovered on a train would be almost certain to be in the morning papers. Anyway, we shall see. . . ."

But it was not in the morning papers. Miss Marple and Mrs. McGillicuddy, after making sure of this, finished their breakfast in silence.

"I think," said Miss Marple eventually, "we might walk down to the police station and talk to Sergeant Cornish. He's intelligent and patient, and I know him very well, and he knows me—I think he'll listen—and he'll pass the information on to the proper quarter."

Accordingly, some three-quarters of an hour later, Miss Marple and Mrs. McGillicuddy were talking to a fresh-faced, grave man between thirty and forty who listened attentively to what they had to say.

At the close of the recital he remained silent for a moment or two. Then he said: "That's a very extraordinary story." His eyes, without seeming to do so, had sized Mrs. McGillicuddy up while she was telling it. "You reported it to the railway officials, and you've come and reported it to me. That's the proper procedure, and you may rely on me to have inquiries instituted."

Miss Marple nodded her head gently, satisfied. Mrs. McGillicuddy was not quite so satisfied, but she did not say anything.

Sergeant Cornish addressed Miss Marple, not so much because he wanted her ideas, as because he wanted to hear what she would say. "Granted the facts are as reported," he said. "What do you think has happened to the body?"

"There seem to be only two possibilities," said Miss Marple without hesitation. "The most *likely* one, of course, is that the body was left in the train, but that seems improbable now, for it would have been found sometime last night, by another traveller or by the railway staff at the train's ultimate destination."

Frank Cornish nodded.

"The only other course open to the murderer would have been to push the body out of the train on to the line. It must, I suppose, be still on the track somewhere, as yet undiscovered—though that does seem a little unlikely. But there would be, as far as I can see, no other way of dealing with it."

"Yes," said Cornish. "The body, if there is a body, ought to have been discovered by now, or will be very soon. I'll let you know any developments there are. There's the possibility, of course, that the woman, though savagely attacked, was not actually dead. She may have been able to leave the train on her own feet."

"Hardly without assistance," said Miss Marple. "And if so, it will have been noticed—a man supporting a woman whom he says is ill."

"Yes, it will have been noticed," said Cornish. "Or if a woman was found unconscious or ill in a carriage and was removed to hospital, that too will be on record. I think you may rest assured that you'll hear about it all in a very short time. . . ."

But that day passed and the next day. On that evening Miss Marple received a note from Sergeant Cornish:

> In regard to the matter on which you consulted me, full inquiries have been made, with no result. No woman's body has been found. No hospital has administered treatment to a woman such as you describe, and no case of a woman suffering from shock or being taken ill, or leaving a station supported by a man has been observed. You may take it that the fullest inquiries have been made. I suggest that your friend may have witnessed a scene such as she described but that it was much less serious than she supposed.

"Less serious? Fiddlesticks!" said Mrs. McGillicuddy. "It was murder! But the trouble is, I don't see what I can do about it."

"I don't think," said Miss Marple thoughtfully, "that there's anything more you *can* do about it. You've reported what you saw—to the railway people and to the police. No, there's nothing more you can do."

"That's a relief, in a way," said Mrs. McGillicuddy, "because, as you know, I'm going out to Ceylon immediately after Christmas—to stay with Roderick, and I certainly do not want to put that visit off—I've been looking forward to it so much. Though of course I *would* put it off if I thought it was my duty," she added conscientiously.

"I'm sure you would, Elspeth."

Miss Marple lost herself in thought. Mrs. McGillicuddy spoke twice before she answered.

"You're getting deaf, Jane."

"Just a little, perhaps. People do not seem to me to enunciate their words as clearly as they

*Continued on page 47*

Martin Charteris (left) and Commander Richard Colville (right) plan the Royal tour with two Canadian advisers in Vancouver

# Blazing a trail for the Queen

*by RICHARD ELLIOTT*

The most travelled monarch ever, she sends her courtiers ahead for facts on anything from housewives' problems to local slang

WHEN President Eisenhower's press secretary, James Hagerty, had finished outlining to newspaper men plans for the Queen's visit to America, an anxious columnist observed that no time had been set aside for talks between the Queen and the President. He need not have worried. During the summer one of Her Majesty's courtiers, a personable six-footer, Martin Charteris, had conveniently begun a holiday in the United States. A lieutenant-colonel and assistant private secretary to the Queen, Charteris had already seen to the niceties of protocol and foretold the possible snags long before the plans were made public.

As a tourist with American connections—he is the son of an American mother and his mother-in-law lives in New York State—Charteris attracted little attention while he worked out a possible tour itinerary in detail, including time for the Queen at the White House. With Charteris was Commander Richard Colville, the Queen's press secretary.

Queen Elizabeth II's courtiers are by now accustomed to reconnoitring lands across the sea. They are so used to the preparatory work that it has become routine. For our globe-trotting Queen is the most travelled monarch the world has known. Since her Coronation she has journeyed more than 60,000 miles abroad, and even as Princess Elizabeth she visited South Africa, Canada, America, Greece, Italy and France.

Among members of her close circle it is well known that the Queen is not a natural traveller and that she does not like journeying for its own sake, but she recognizes that this is the way ahead for a monarchy that must keep in touch, especially with the Commonwealth, in a changing world.

Before each overseas tour the Queen and Prince Philip make a practice of holding small dinner parties in their suite in the north wing of Buckingham Palace. Their guests are chiefly equerries and others with special knowledge of the countries to be visited; the main topics of conversation are always the places and people on the tour itinerary.

It is through informal briefing of this sort that the Queen knows how to put exactly the right questions in every situation. She likes particularly to get a grasp of the domestic problems of housewives—and Prince Philip usually gives the impression that he knows a lot about the other man's job. Both the Queen and Prince Philip are normally diligent readers, but they each spend a good deal of time in the weeks preceding the tour reading up "background" for the trip ahead and they have been known to cross-examine each other about their new knowledge. So by the time they set foot in the host country they are well read on the subjects of its people and its social and economic life.

At this stage they are also supplied with concise typewritten notes about each place on their route, and biographical information about the people they are to meet.

Usually the Queen carries these refresher notes in her handbag and likes to glance over them in the Royal car shortly before her arrival. Special booklets are prepared for the Queen and Prince Philip, lucidly explaining slang words likely to be met.

Although the broad tour plan is drawn up for each Royal visit at top government level by the host country, the Queen makes a practice of sending experienced members of her Court ahead to fill in the details. In this work, Charteris is the most practised. He has paved the way for several Royal tours, starting with the Queen's visit to Canada as Princess Elizabeth.

When a flight is involved, the Palace "recce" party includes Air Commodore Sir Edward ("Mouse") Fielden, Captain of the Queen's Flight. Fielden taught the Duke of Windsor to fly and has held posts similar to his present one since the Duke was King. The Queen's private secretary, Sir Michael Adeane, did most of the spade work for the 1953-54 Australasian tour. The travelling equerries have a two-way job. Not only do they gather information for the Queen but they also brief people who are to be introduced to her and who may be acting as Royalty's hosts.

They explain that the Royal couple can never take their places side-by-side like other husbands and wives. As the Queen is monarch, and the Prince her escort, he must be a pace behind. Although protocol requires that the Queen should be addressed as "Your Majesty" and the Prince as "Your Royal Highness," the Queen and Prince Philip prefer to be addressed more simply as "Ma'm" and "Sir" after the ice has been broken.

The equerries also take precautions over the meal arrangements, not only in the interests of the Royal couple's tastes but also to prevent embarrassment to the host and hostess. Prince Philip has no say in gastronomical matters, for State banquets are always planned to suit the Queen's palate.

Her Majesty, however, makes a point of watching her husband's interests, and her equerries are instructed to bear in mind his dislikes, which are few. He is partial to all kinds of shell fish, which the Queen dislikes.

One special request made on the Queen's behalf as often as possible is that she and Prince Philip should have a pot of tea together before retiring for the night. Whenever possible, Prince Philip likes to "brew-up" with a kettle on a spirit stove.

People abroad are frequently astonished at the pace and thoroughness of the Queen's tours. During the recent Paris visit, she was continually engaged daily from 7 a.m. to midnight. The

## BEHIND THE SCENES ON A ROYAL TOUR

Margaret Macdonald attends to small domestic details

Sir Michael Adeane planned the 1953 Australasian tour

Lady Alice Egerton looks after the Queen's dresses

In May this year, the Queen spent three days in Denmark. Even a short state visit means months of research and planning for Court officials

strain is felt by those officially accompanying the Royal couple.

When the Queen visited Paris last spring, France provided twenty-three plain-clothes officers to form an inconspicuous bodyguard wherever she went. Sometimes they wore the court dress of officials, sometimes the clothes of the man in the street. At the Royal luncheon at Versailles, several of them were just behind her dressed in the Louis-Seize costume of palace "flunkies." But always the Queen's personal police officer, Superintendent Albert Edward Perkins, was close by.

Perkins is the only member of the British party who knows the identities of all the disguised bodyguards supplied by the various host countries. He is also shown rogues' galleries of men and women liable to make a nuisance of themselves on a Royal occasion. Perkins, and Prince Philip's personal police officer, Inspector Frank Kelly, are reputed to have photographic memories. They are always prepared to combine immaculate tact with a propensity to "get in the way accidentally" should any unauthorized person attempt to approach too close to the Queen.

The Queen's dressmaker, Norman Hartnell, is another who visits the land to be toured by the Queen. It was a typical coincidence that he was in Canada many weeks before the impending Royal tour was scheduled. He kept an eye open for local fashion trends, and made certain that the Queen would arrive with clothes suited to the climate.

Among the Queen's personal staff, Lady Alice Egerton has more experience of overseas tours than any other lady-in-waiting, with Lady Rose Baring a close second. One of the responsibilities of Lady Alice, an attractive blue-eyed brunette, is to see that Hartnell's tabulated dress plan for each official function is strictly followed.

Lady Alice has inventories for each piece of the Queen's luggage showing which clothes they contain. Each item has a number. During the tours Lady Alice does more packing and unpacking than anyone else except the Queen's personal maid, Margaret Macdonald. Miss Macdonald attends to such domestic details as the Queen's own type of face cloths, which Miss Macdonald makes by cutting old towels into squares and blanket-stitching the edges with red thread. One of the secrets of the Queen's complexion is that she washes frequently in cold water, using each cloth only once before re-laundering.

The Queen prefers sea travel to flying, yet she is not a good sailor. She was particularly unfortunate when the Britannia, taking her to Scandinavia, ran into strong winds and heavy seas. The Britannia pitches and rolls far more than the experts expected, and for that reason she is known gloomily among queasy Royal servants as "the Altmark." One of the reasons for the new refit of the Britannia is that the Queen and many of her household have suffered seasickness more than anyone should in a Royal yacht.

Because Prince Charles and Princess Anne miss their parents so much during their long absences abroad, the Queen some time ago got the idea of sending back personal tape recordings from Australia.

Both the Royal children are now used to family partings, and are too well schooled in official goodbyes to dissolve into tears on leave taking. Much play was made of the fact that Prince Charles was seen wiping his eye as he stepped down from the Royal plane after seeing off his parents to Nigeria. In fact, it was not grief at parting that brought the tears, but the point-blank refusal of his mother to order the captain of the aircraft to make a special take-off and landing with Charles aboard.

The Queen herself, who would really rather stay at home, will have little opportunity in the weeks ahead to pursue her own personal interests. She is also less likely to show fatigue than those around her on the forthcoming Canada-United States trip When the Royal suite returned to Buckingham Palace after one recent tour overseas, Lady Rose Baring was heard to exclaim to a household official: "We are all worn out. I don't know how the Queen does it."

THE END

*Martha was tough, but she didn't make sense to Greg. What was the use of courage when you hadn't a gun in your hand?*

# Secret Fear

*by EDWARD LINDALL*

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN MAUDSON

GREG TENNISON picked up a smooth pebble from the dry creek bed and put it under his tongue. It was no drink of water, but it would help to stimulate the salivary glands and keep his mouth at least a little moist. He selected a smaller one and offered it to the slender, fair-haired woman sprawled wearily at his side.

"The best I can do," he said bitterly. "You take it neat—without water."

Martha lifted her head. "It's not your fault the soak is dry."

They were resting in the sparse shade of a straggly eucalyptus that overhung the creek. Before them were the holes and mounds of sand where they had dug fruitlessly for the water that should have been cradled in the sub-surface rocks. Behind them lay a knapsack of canned food, a sporting rifle and a two-gallon water can that now held about a gallon. It was all they had been able to carry away from the wreck of their Land-Rover, smashed by a rock-slide the preceding day.

The land about them, a vast section of north-west Australia, was parched and gasping with midsummer heat. The stunted trees and thin undergrowth were limp. The sky was thin and very high, pale blue and cloudless.

"We'll each take a small drink before we move," Greg said. "That's six hours from now, and about two before sundown."

She turned towards him, her eyes tinged red with weariness and sun glare, her full lips cracked and a little swollen. "Tell me the truth, Greg," she said. "Have we a chance? Is it worth punishing ourselves by going any farther?"

He didn't answer at once. The next water that he knew was in the northernmost bore hole on their Catfish Springs cattle-run, fifty, perhaps sixty, miles away. With only a gallon between them, their prospects of reaching it were hideously remote.

"Maybe we'll find some water on the way," he said at last, flatly. "Maybe we won't. But there's always a chance. We can't just sit here waiting for the crows."

She looked at him gravely for a long moment and, although there was fear far back in her blue eyes, it was being held under control. In the outward quietness of her eyes and the firm but not too firm set of her lips Greg read the signs of a resilient strength that he had not seen in her before. In the six months of their married life at Catfish Springs he had thought she was without true courage, but, now that the chips were really down, she was confounding him.

"Forget I asked that," she said, and gave him a small, wry smile. "You say what we'll do and I'll go along."

He looked away, to the drab olive-green wilderness across the whitened creek bed. "Let's get some sleep," he said gruffly. "We're going to walk all night."

But sleep did not come to him quickly as it did to Martha. She scooped a hip-hole for herself, made a pillow from a mound of sand and pebbles covered with her soft felt hat, and weariness swamped her in minutes. Greg lay awake, wanting sleep, but denied it by the searing acrobatics of his mind.

The dried-up water soak was the final irony, the final brutal answer to his attempt to show his wife that there was no need to fear this country, that all you needed to meet its challenge was preparedness and a determination to face it. Now he told himself that it would have been better to have let her fly south on her one-way holiday to Sydney, where she belonged, without ever organizing this trip to show her that her fears were unjustified. Then, at least, she would have stayed alive.

He knew—they had both known—that she would never have returned to the loneliness of the Catfish Springs homestead. She had been too miserable there, and their days together too embittered by her inability to overcome her fears of this wild country. It was so shatteringly different from what she had imagined during their swift courtship and marriage in the city.

Greg had been born in the outback, and at first he hadn't understood. When at last he did, he was powerless to help, too much a victim of his own unhappiness. Only when he realized the significance of her projected holiday had he been able to force himself to attempt some reclamation.

He turned on his side and the sight of Martha lying so close, relaxed and soft in sleep, was almost more than he could bear. Her hair, short and curled, dropped tendrils on her cheeks. Wistfulness touched the lips that had almost forgotten how to smile during the months that they had lived together at Catfish Springs, and had loved each other and had lost communication.

He shook his head, slowly, in defeat, as these things whirled like a summer dust-storm in his mind. When sleep came, in tired waves, he dreamed, so that, when the sleep ended in the late afternoon, there was sourness in his mouth and a vast bitterness inside him.

Martha was already awake, working on her hair with a comb. It seemed to Greg, in that first moment of waking, a ludicrous thing to do in such circumstances. But then she turned her head and he saw that the tidied hair and the sleep had put a new face on her tiredness. He wished they had enough water for him to shave. His growth of whiskers and his dirtiness made him feel absurdly disreputable.

She stood up, her hands automatically attempting the hopeless task of smoothing the creases from her skirt. She said: "I'll open a can of meat. We ought to eat."

"Sure," Tennison said. "Meantime I'll look in those holes again. Sometimes water seeps through hours after you dig them."

Martha shook her head. "I've looked."

He hadn't really expected to find water in the soak, but her denial was the thud of inescapable finality. He scrambled to his feet, leaden-legged, and suddenly his breath caught in his throat. A black shape had come unstuck from the shadow of a tree a hundred yards away, melting out of sight behind the trunk.

A Myall. . . .

Greg's mouth tightened. "Bring on the food," he said tersely. "The sooner we get moving the better." He picked up the rifle, tucked the butt under his armpit and rested the barrel across his forearm. It was the nearest thing to the ready position he could assume without telling Martha they had company. He uncapped the water-can with his left hand. "Take a mouthful. It'll help you swallow."

So they had their lubricating mouthfuls, and shared a tin of pressed meat and four hard ration biscuits. And all the time Tennison kept his eyes slipping around the bush. He had to keep this from her. She had shown courage in facing what they had had to face so far. She deserved to be spared another fear.

He reckoned there would be anything from twenty to thirty Myalls skulking in the trees and undergrowth. The Myalls were wild, nomadic people who roamed the northern bush-lands, their tribes largely unidentified. They were strange people, aloof and unpredictable.

THEY were being unpredictable now, and it troubled Greg. Normally they shunned white folk, but here they were in close contact. They were up to some devilry. . . .

They finished the food and each took four mouthfuls of water from the can. Greg handed it to Martha, shrugged his big shoulders into the straps of the knapsack, and cradled the rifle across his body. He doubted whether the Myalls would attempt any mischief while he had the rifle in his hands, because they were deeply and superstitiously afraid of firearms. But the moment could come, at any time, when some young buck might decide to carve himself a piece of tribal immortality.

"You lead on," he said to Martha. "Straight ahead, away from the creek bed. We'll get out into that open spinifex country."

"But the heat?"

"It won't last long," he said curtly. "I can keep direction better out there."

He stumped behind her, his eyes raking the

bush and his back crawling with vulnerability. They had to cover only five hundred yards to get clear of the trees, but to Tennison it seemed like miles.

He was soaked with sweat by the time they reached the open plain.

After even the scant shade of the trees, the heat out there really scorched them. There was no movement in the air and the red earth between the knee-high spinifex bushes glowed as though on fire.

Martha slowed for Greg to come up and they turned southwards together, about five hundred yards out from the trees. The plain stretched away before them, immense and featureless and, measuring their strides against it in his mind, Greg was all but overwhelmed with hopelessness. He darted a quick glance at Martha and the strained look on her face told him she felt it too.

"We'll whittle it down," he said. "We'll walk without stopping until the light goes. Then we'll rest and wait for the moon."

"You make it sound like a bus," she said.

Greg's grey eyes narrowed. "Still thinking of the city?"

"No," she said. "Not any longer." Then she threw him a small, warm, rather frightened smile. "Greg, I'm sorry . . . sorry about everything."

Tennison stopped, swinging round, and his arms went out to comfort her. But, as he turned, the sun slashed under his hat brim and he became conscious of the rifle in his hand. He remembered, in time, that this was no occasion for emotion, for softness.

"Stop it," Greg told her harshly. "If you have to talk, then talk sense. But best of all, don't talk at all. It'll only make you thirstier."

He saw her body stiffen and her head lift slowly. The expression on her face was one of mixed surprise and anger, and he was glad, because he knew that he had snatched her away from danger.

She must have known it, too. The anger faded from her mouth and eyes. She said wryly: "I thought we were going to walk nonstop."

So they turned together and walked, threading their way through the clumps of spinifex in a new companionship. And Greg considered the bitter irony that they should have achieved it now, when it had been impossible in the days of comfort.

They kept on through the dying afternoon, watching the shadows from the bush reach out towards them. . . . Then it was night and they

*Continued on page 44*

**"I'm not scared of people," Martha told him. Painfully she picked up the rifle**

THE SLEDGE PATROL · 2

**Poulsen shouted defiance into the night. At his words, a machine gun opened up and bullets flew at him across the ice**

# 'If you want war—you shall have it'

by DAVID HOWARTH

FOR a few seconds, in the darkness outside the Arctic hut, the Germans could see nothing. They knew that, only a brief time before, the three men they were seeking had been inside the hut. The Germans had been foiled of their surprise by the sledge dogs, which had suddenly started howling; and, as the attackers ran forward in the darkness, they found themselves in the middle of a tangle of dogs, leaping at them with bared teeth.

It was vital to the very existence of the Germans that they should capture, and if necessary kill, the three men who had been in the hut. For this small party of Germans, under the command of a naval officer, Lieutenant Ritter, had landed secretly on the desolate east coast of Greenland. Throughout the winter of 1942-43 they lay there undetected, radioing three times a day weather reports that were invaluable to the U-boat packs in the Atlantic and the aircraft harrying the British convoys to Russia.

But now, in this empty Arctic waste where no man should have been, two of the Germans had been spotted.

They had been seen by two Eskimos and a member of the North-East Greenland Sledge Patrol. This, for all its impressive name, was a small, fifteen-man organization of Arctic hunters who had been asked by the Governor of Greenland, Eske Brun, to watch the uninhabited east coast in case of a German landing. The men of the sledge patrol never seriously expected any such thing in such a remote part of the world. So these three—Marius Jensen, a Dane, and two Eskimos named William and Mikael—were amazed when they found human bootprints in the snow, saw two men running from a hunting hut, and found inside it a jacket with a swastika on it.

The Eskimos, in their Arctic simplicity, could see no real danger in this. Marius, however, decided that their party should move for the night to another hunting hut across the sound. But even he had not realized how seriously the Germans would take their discovery, and how quickly they would act.

For when the news came to Ritter, he knew that he must act swiftly, in spite of his hatred of disturbing the Arctic peacefulness which he loved and had experienced for years before the war. But he was forced into action, not only

**His frostbitten hands could not turn the door handle. He had to face the irony of dying there, on the doorstep of safety**

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN BERRY

Sledge patrol men were masters at controlling dog teams. The Germans had to learn—and so lost many days before attacking the patrol headquarters

Brun (right) created the fifteen-man Greenland Army, with Poulsen as leader. This was their first meeting—in Denmark after the war

for self-preservation, but because he was already suspect by the confirmed Nazis of his party—particularly by Schmidt, a senior official, and Dr. Weiss, the leading meteorologist. Ritter did not fear these men for himself, but for what they could get the Nazis to do in Germany to his wife and daughter, who were virtually hostages.

So he had despatched a pursuit party, headed by Weiss and Schmidt, to follow the tracks of the men who had discovered their existence. The tracks had led to a hunting hut across the sound, where, in all innocence, the three members of the sledge patrol had settled for the night, not worrying that they showed a light.

But as the Germans rushed the hut, the dogs howled. The light went out. The attackers found themselves, in pitch darkness, among the snarling dogs.

Then Weiss saw that the dogs were chained, and shouted, "The dogs are tied up. Go round them! Go round them!"

He himself dashed for the door of the hut, ready for a desperate resistance, and jumped inside. It was empty.

Weiss was surprised and baffled. For the moment, the men had slipped out of his grasp. But he had captured the sledges and the dogs. He also found three sets of fur clothes and boots and gloves. He knew how far it was to Eskimoness, and he reasoned that the three men would have to come back to get their equipment or freeze to death.

Confidently, the Germans settled down to wait. They amused themselves by trying to read Marius's logbook, which was lying open on the table. . . .

But Marius, William and Mikael never thought of going back to get their gear.

The howling of dogs is a language which a sledge driver understands, and when the dogs had started that night it was not a howl of pleasure or contentment, or a howl at the moon: it was alarm. Everything happened in a few seconds. William and Mikael tried to harness the dogs. Marius saw that it was too late.

"Run for it!" he shouted. "Up the hill!"

Behind the hut the ground rose steeply for six hundred feet, but the men fell and slid back in the drifts of snow and they had not climbed very far before they were out of breath.

The Eskimos urged Marius to hurry, but he wanted to wait and collect his wits and see what was going to happen.

"You go on," he whispered. "Get to Eskimoness if you can."

They went, and left him alone.

While the Germans waited in the hut, and one of them stamped his feet on sentry-go outside, Marius was shivering behind a rock two hundred feet above them. But he could not wait for long. As Weiss had surmised, he would soon have frozen to death with none of his outer clothes on.

After half an hour or so, he turned away from the hut and climbed the hill. On the other side, in the moonlight, range after range of white mountains could be seen, still standing in friendly solitude and silence. He began to plough his way down through waist deep snow, aiming to meet the shore again ten miles beyond the hut.

Marius and both of the Eskimos had taken their rifles with them when they ran so hurriedly out of the hut, not because they had any idea of shooting anyone but because an Arctic hunter picks up his rifle by instinct. It was lucky for Marius; because in the dawn, almost as soon as he got on to the sea ice again, he met a bear. Among the broken ice, he was almost on top of the animal before they saw each other. He stopped in his tracks and watched it; and it watched him.

It was Marius whose nerve broke first: he reluctantly raised his rifle and fired. The bear fell dead. The sound of the shot echoed round the hills and he listened, half expecting shouts or an answering shot; but the silence fell back again.

MARIUS left the bear where it had fallen, and walked on in a daze of weariness. He saw only too clearly how unwise he had been to underrate the Germans. If they caught him, the way was wide open for them to go on to Eskimoness and surprise his comrades there.

The thought of the unknown enemy behind him and of his friends at Eskimoness—fifty miles away—all unsuspecting and unprepared, spurred Marius on. . . .

Eskimoness was in one of its quiet periods; nearly everyone was away. Kurt Olsen, the young radio operator, was patrolling Hold With Hope with an Eskimo called Aparte. The last of the five Europeans who had wintered there was on a journey round the coasts of Clavering Island. He was Henry Rudi, a Norwegian, a veteran hunter in his middle fifties.

Poulsen was doing the weather broadcasts single-handed, and teaching the job to a man called Eli Knudsen.

It was eleven o'clock in the morning of March 13 when Poulsen looked out by habit across the ice and saw the sight which put a sudden end to the peace he had enjoyed all through the winter. It was only a dark speck, but he knew at once what it was even before he had reached for his field-glasses. It was one man, alone, and he was walking. "Harness some dogs," Poulsen shouted to Knudsen, pointing at the distant figure, "and bring him in quickly."

Poulsen began himself to get things ready in the hut—the stove, first aid chest, hot drinks and a bunk—because a man without dogs, walking, could only mean disaster.

He went out as Knudsen came across the shore-ice, riding the sledge with an almost lifeless man lying on it: Marius.

"Germans!" Knudsen shouted. "Germans at Sabine Island!"

The sledge drew up and Knudsen jumped off it, and Poulsen ran to give Marius a hand: Marius, grey with exhaustion, tattered, dirty. He could only gasp out an incoherent story: "The Germans are there. They have got the sledges. They may be coming any minute to attack."

Poulsen and Knudsen hauled him up and helped him indoors and noticed that he had lost his boots and had been walking in his socks. They worked over him and found that he had nothing wrong except first-degree frostbite which would cure itself; they warmed him and gave him a drink and some food and put him to bed.

"Now, tell me exactly what happened," Poulsen said harshly. He had to know before Marius fell asleep.

From what Marius said, there seemed to be every chance that in less than six hours the Germans would be there at Eskimoness. The minute Poulsen had pieced the whole story together, he sat down and wrote a signal to tell Eske Brun exactly what had happened.

A little later William and Mikael arrived, bedraggled and weary but otherwise not much the worse and Poulsen had time to make up his mind what to do.

With so much to think about, nobody bothered to ask Marius how he had got back to Eskimoness, and later, when they did ask him, he could hardly remember anything about it.

The bare facts make his journey unique of its kind in Arctic travel. In thirty-four hours, without any food whatever, at the end of a long day's journey, he had climbed over the hills at the back of Cape Wynn and walked fifty-six miles across the ice. He had stopped once, so far as he could remember, at a hut where he had made a fruitless search for food; but that had been near the beginning, soon after he shot the bear. Somewhere on the way, he had passed William and Mikael, who had stopped in a hut and gone to sleep.

"What happened to your boots?" asked Poulsen.

Marius shook his head, not knowing. Somewhere, his skin boots had fallen to pieces.

Once Poulsen had got his signal away he felt

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a bit happier, not only because he had done his job, but also because he supposed the American air force would take charge of the situation within a day or two. In the meantime, he had to prepare to hold on until they came.

He sent Knudsen to find Henry Rudi, and the two men came in that evening. Rudi was anxious and rather more subdued than usual. Poulsen explained his plan of defence.

The first thing was a plan to retreat. So three of the four remaining dog teams were picketed some distance away from the house behind a hill. Poulsen's own dogs were kept by the house as watchdogs for the night. A depot of tents and provisions and travelling gear was laid in the hills, so that if necessary they would be able to get away to safety.

For the more active defence, they blacked out the windows and began to build breastworks of sandbags inside them; and bit by bit they put up firing points at strategic places round the house, barricading them with sacks of coal and empty coal sacks filled with broken ice.

That night Poulsen did not even try to sleep. The trouble was that he did not really know if he was supposed to fight the Germans. He was only a civilian, and so were all his men; and he vaguely knew that civilians who took up arms against a soldier were breaking some international convention.

But Poulsen was luckier than many men who have been left in charge of distant outposts. In Eske Brun he had a commander who knew his own mind and could guess what was going on in the minds of his subordinates. The next morning, an enormously long signal came from the west coast; and as Poulsen ploughed through it with his cipher book his spirits rose.

"Your main task till further notice obtain fullest most reliable information and if possible without prejudice to main task also to eliminate enemy forces by capture or shooting," it began. And it ended, "Remember enemy probably resolute so take no chances but shoot first. Brun."

Poulsen read this signal through and through and to make sure that all his men saw it he stuck it up on the wall inside the door: an action with consequences which nobody could have foreseen.

The signal not only promised the personal support of Eske Brun, but it also made Poulsen expect the Americans very soon.

But in fact, that was quite impossible. Eskimoness was 750 miles from the nearest air force base, which was in Iceland. There were not very many aircraft then which could do a round trip of 1,500 miles carrying bombs.

So Poulsen was really hundreds of miles beyond the range of help. But he did not know it, and everything he did in the next few weeks was done in the belief, which only dwindled slowly, that the American air force must be on the way.

IN the meantime, Eske Brun had begun to worry about the order he had sent. If the sledge patrol got captured in spite of it, the Germans would be quite within their rights if they executed the whole patrol as *francs-tireurs*.

When he thought it over, he hit on an answer which pleased him enormously. He decided to found an army: the Greenland Army. He wrote out a set of commissions and appointments, and then sent a signal to Poulsen. Poulsen was made a captain, and the senior Dane at Scoresby Sound a lieutenant. Kurt Olsen, as second in command at Eskimoness, became a sergeant. On consideration, Eske Brun decided not to have any private soldiers in his army, and so he made all the rest of the Europeans corporals: Marius Jensen, Eli Knudsen, Peter Nielsen and Henry Rudi. It was impossible to provide them with uniforms before the summer but, in the meantime, he told them to make armbands for themselves in blue and white, with a number of stars according to their rank. At its greatest strength the Greenland Army mustered two officers, one

After Marius Jensen (right) escaped from the German raiding party, he went to Eskimoness to warn Kurt Olsen (left) and the other members of the sledge patrol to expect an attack

sergeant and six corporals, together with six non-combatant Eskimo sledge drivers.

The whole arrangement had a charming element of farce in it, but it was also practical. It gave Poulsen an official rank at last, and it gave all the men at Eskimoness something to laugh about. When they had all got over their surprise, and sewn their armbands, and got tired of saluting Poulsen and pulling Henry Rudi's leg for having achieved two stripes so late in life, they went back to work on their fortifications with extra confidence. The Greenland Army; it did not want to fight, but if it had to every man in it had a rifle and could hit a musk-ox at a thousand yards.

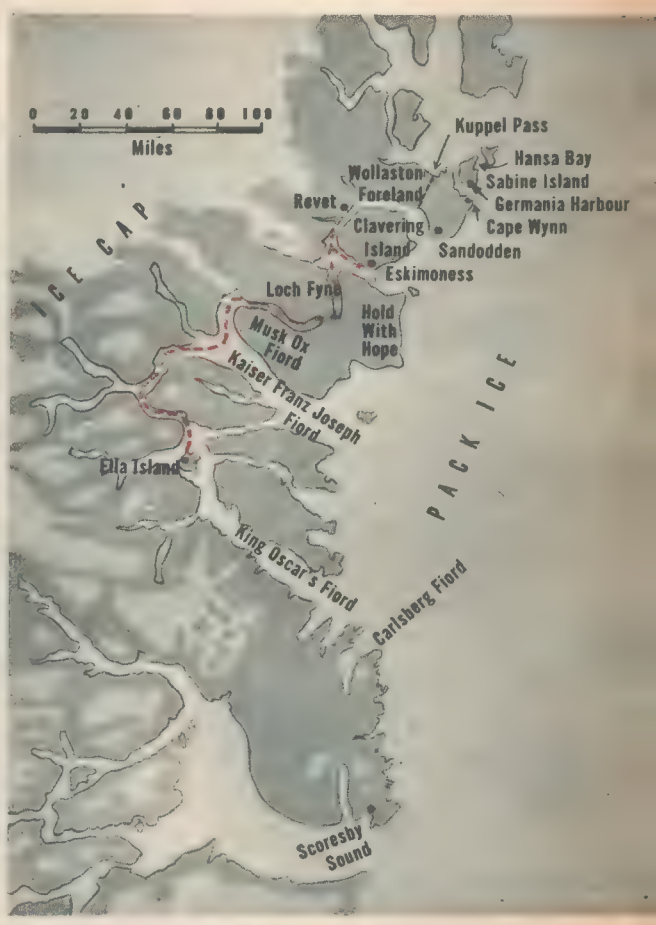
RITTER had also sent a signal to his headquarters as soon as Dr. Weiss had come in with the news that the three sledge drivers had disappeared. He had to assume that they had got back to Eskimoness alive, and so he had to report that his base had been discovered. He also asked for orders, but the answer he got was not nearly so satisfactory as Poulsen's. It simply told him to use his own discretion; and in all the circumstances that was just what Ritter did not want to do. He would much rather have had a definite order, which might have helped him to silence his own conscience and prevented any criticism from his Nazis.

Poulsen and Marius had been surprised that the Germans did not attack Eskimoness the very day that Marius returned. The reason was so simple that they had not thought of it. The Germans had captured three excellent dog teams, but they did not know how to drive them, and they had no other kind of transport.

"We ought to go to Eskimoness at once," said Ritter to Dr. Weiss, "but you have seen for yourself that it is impossible to travel distances in this country unless you can manage a dog team efficiently. So the men must learn."

The Germans set to work at sledging with enthusiasm. It was a new kind of sport for them, and a change from the tedious routine of Hansa Bay. Ritter taught them what he knew about it, and also put in some practice on his own; and between his sledge practices he began to read Marius Jensen's log book—in his travels, he had learned a good many languages. When he had read it all, there was not very much more for him to learn about the sledge patrol. He knew its strength and guessed that it was only armed with rifles, and he knew more or less where all its members had been when Marius had started on his journey.

From a strictly military point of view the log book presented Ritter with the kind of advantage that generals dream about. But from a




The route taken by Poulsen in his lone trek from Eskimoness to Revet and then to Ella Island. He walked 230 miles across the ice

psychological point of view it did him more harm than good. It told him far too much about his opponents.

They were exactly the kind of people he had known in Spitzbergen and come to like so much. They were living exactly the sort of life he had enjoyed. He found himself almost wishing he was with them, driving freely about the coast instead of sitting imprisoned with his Nazis.

He had no wish to do such people any harm—but, at least, he had to do his best to protect his base and the men under his own command.

So it was clearly his military duty to smash the radio transmitter at Eskimoness; and his conscience had nothing to say against it. Of course, he could not expect the Danes to agree, but he hoped to persuade them that it was not worth shedding blood about.

By the end of the week, the sledge patrol

*Continued on page 53*

*A sultry song, a smoky voice, a sixth-former's zest—they make women rave about Yana, the . . .*

# Pin-up with a million girl friends

*by ALAN LLOYD*

**Revisiting her old school at Newton Abbot, Yana sat at the desk where she was once a student**

**Yana with comedian Peter Jones in her TV show. Yana was her nickname as a schoolchild and she adopted it when she became a model**

**Yana is unusually nervous when her call draws near. Her deep dread of being badly received once led her to reject a top-line engagement**

AT a crowded northern theatre early last August, Yana, an entertainer who has been presented to the public as slinky, smoky-voiced, sultry and seductive, stepped up to the footlights wearing an off-the-shoulder dress. She clasped her hands behind her, leaned forward and coyly asked the audience: "Will you do something for me?" The loudest response came from some children whose parents had allowed them to stay up late for the show. Yana asked them to clap in time with her next number.

A few minutes later she walked to the front of the orchestra pit with a hand microphone and tried to coax a man from the front row of the stalls on to the stage so that she could serenade him with a love song called "Climb Up The Wall." The man's small daughter darted forward instead. Yana, embarrassed in her intention, put an arm round the child and sang the number in ballad style. It earned her more applause than her other songs.

Despite the low-cut gowns, the pointed lyrics, and the provocative build-up that has created Yana, nine out of every ten letters that she receives from admirers are written by women and children.

When Yana recently made a much-publicised visit to Newton Abbot Girls' Secondary School, Devon—where she had once been games captain, house captain, and a star performer at gym—the school assembled eagerly in her honour and sang "Widdicombe Fair." The headmistress, Mrs. Emily Perrett, says: "Yana has not changed a bit. She could never spell, nor do arithmetic, but she was a great talker, a tomboy, and a natural leader among the girls."

At a conservative estimate Yana has been seen by about 70 million television viewers in Britain and America. She had her own programme on B.B.C. TV; she appeared in the Ed Sullivan show *Toast of the Town* during a five months' tour of the United States; she starred for almost a year (longer than any other performer) at London's Pigalle restaurant, and she has topped the bill in West End variety.

Off-duty Yana becomes Pamela Guard, a short, broad-shouldered girl of twenty-five, with wide, unblinking eyes set in a pleasantly round face; who wears no make-up and uses the robust, assertive conversational manner of a modern sixth-form schoolgirl.

Peter Jones, the comedian and scriptwriter, recalls that during a television show last year Miss Guard wanted to wear a comic wig and glasses, and appear as an elderly folk-dancing spinster. The producer refused to let her do it. He reminded her that Yana was expected to be glamorous. "She seemed quite willing to dress up in anything," says Jones.

"Why are so many people more concerned about what you are wearing than about what you are thinking?" asked Miss Guard recently. "I get fed up with them. When one reporter asked me how many sequins there were on my gown, how much it cost, and whether it made walking difficult, I replied: 'I haven't counted them, it's none of your business, and I wouldn't be wearing it if it did.'"

YANA has been glamorized by photographers and satirized by critics. In one sultry song the words include an invitation to "a hug on a rug." One critic observed that Yana sang this line in the sort of tone that she might use to inquire: "Anyone for tennis?" Another wrote of "the full blast of her intimate vocal approach." It is estimated that Yana gets an income in the region of £500 a week from her voice.

Her attitude sways easily from severity to sympathy. The thought of anything small and weak being in danger can excite her to uncontrollable anguish. A friend says that Yana once wept in her dressing-room before a show because she was worried about a fledgling which she had found fallen from its nest that morning. Assured that the creature had survived, she went on stage in excellent spirits. She once wanted to be a vet.

Freddie Brown, an official of the Blackpool Tower Company, remembers taking Miss Guard

Lautrec and Suzette, Yana's two poodles, accompany her on many of her engagements

Yana and comedian Bob Hope. She has been a hairdresser, model and a cabaret singer

to the pleasure beach during her season at the Opera House, Blackpool, this year. Says Brown: "She wouldn't come away until she had tried her hand at everything—dipper, roundabouts, shooting—the lot. Her dress had been crisp and white when we set out. When we returned it was crumpled and patterned with dirt. She seemed oblivious of the fact."

After the Blackpool show had been running for several hectic weeks, and most of the artists were complaining of minor ailments or fatigue, Brown anxiously asked Yana how she felt. "Fine thanks," she replied with zest. "What ever made you ask?"

At rehearsals Pamela Guard goes over her act again and again with intense concentration. Often she is the first person to arrive at the theatre and the last person to leave.

In the dressing-room, Yana becomes uncharacteristically nervous as her call draws near, and she fusses over make-up pots on the dressing-table. People who know her say that this is because she fears that one day an audience might receive her rudely. At a Madrid theatre she suddenly became aware of a growing volume of hissing apparently coming from the auditorium while she was singing.

"My hands began to perspire and my throat dried up," she says. "I thought, I can't possibly finish the number." Then, with relief, she realized that the noise was caused by rain falling on the canopy roof of the house.

Yana turned down an offer to appear at the Café de Paris—then the professional ambition of many entertainers—because she could not face the possibility of empty tables on the first night.

Miss Guard has hinted that she would like to be known as an actress, but she has yet to appear in professional drama and her film rôles have seldom confirmed the publicity that preceded them. In *The Ship That Died Of Shame* Yana lit a cigarette. In *Zarak* she provided the singing voice for Anita Ekberg. In the American and Canadian versions of *Cockleshell Heroes* she appeared as a Wren who sang "The London I Love," but she was cut from the film before its London premiére.

Mrs. Audrey Watkins, a Devonshire publican's wife who was at school with Yana in Newton Abbot, says that Pamela was always a determined girl. After a rumpus in the cookery class one day, the teacher ordered Pamela to report to the headmistress. She flatly refused to leave the room.

"The more frightening the teacher became, the tighter Pam dug her heels in," recalls Mrs. Watkins. "In the end she won. The mistress gave up."

The same determination was in evidence after the launching of *The Yana Show* on B.B.C. TV last year. The first edition, planned as an expensive production, resulted in near chaos. Stage hands passed in front of the cameras, chairs were whipped out of sight by unseen hands, and dancers fell. The B.B.C. was receiving complaints by telephone before the show was over.

"The pasting she took was enough to have disheartened some entertainers with far more experience," says one critic. But Yana rallied stoically, gradually regained ground in the following editions, and completed the series, if not in triumph, in an atmosphere of respect.

DELIVERING milk near Kingston, Surrey, early one morning, a roundsman was surprised when Yana pulled alongside in her pastel-blue Vanguard estate car, bought a bottle of milk, and drank its contents on the spot. Stardom has not altered her habit of taking nourishment haphazardly. Once she woke at 3 a.m. and called for a plate of salmon. When it arrived, she sat up in bed as excitedly as a schoolgirl and devoured it with piles of bread and butter.

Her father died when she was an infant and her mother worked to support two daughters. When Pamela Guard left school she got a job at Steiner's Mayfair hairdressing salon. "She was here for two years but she did not get beyond the shampooing stage," says Steiner's secretary. Miss Guard switched her attack to another wing and scored successively as a model and as a late-night cabaret singer.

It was while she was singing at a West End club that Bill Lyon-Shaw, then a B.B.C. television producer, and his wife saw her. Lyon-Shaw approved. His wife also approved. Yana's staying power as an artist has been attributed to the approval of millions of women since.

"She is a very English girl, keen to learn, and much liked," says Lyon-Shaw, whose meeting with her eventually led to her appearance on *Variety Parade*.

During her early Lime Grove transmissions Pamela Guard was always introduced to her audience posed motionless and silent while an orchestra played an appropriately languorous accompaniment. The cameraman's instructions read: "Move forward for four beats; back for three; elevate for four." On the effect of those three phrases her fame became nationwide.

While opinion has varied on the quality of the voice that followed the vision, nobody has questioned its clarity or carrying power. When the microphone ceased to work while she was singing at one of the largest theatres in the country, Yana stepped to one side, raised her voice, and carried on with her number. "There were three thousand people in the audience," says her secretary. "They heard her better than before."

Yana was equally resourceful during a visit to the United States last year. At a formal cocktail party in Chicago she was asked to sing something for the other guests. She gave them a boisterous version of "Knocked 'Em In The Old Kent Road." THE END

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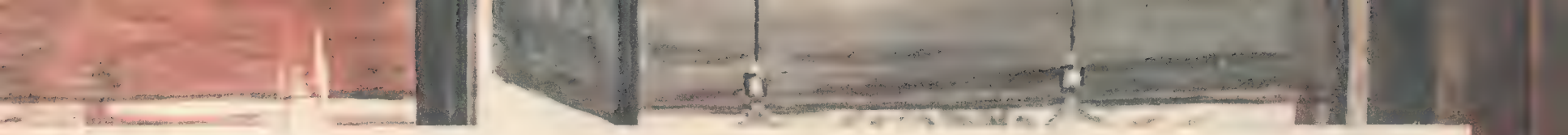

Jane would deal with this young brigand. She knew a few tricks of the trade that would knock him cold

# The Girl and the Grocer

*by* ***BRETON AMIS***

ILLUSTRATED BY EDWIN PHILLIPS

In a bibbed white apron, a pencil behind one ear, Scobie was slicing bacon when his daughter Jane said: "He's at it again, Dad."

Glancing across the street, Scobie saw, written in whiting on his rival's window, *New-Laid—3s. 9d.* Muttering angrily, Scobie reduced his own eggs from four shillings, and wrote up, *LOCAL New-Laid.*

Opposite, a hand moved across the window again . . . *LARGE Local New-Laid.*

*Liar*! scrawled Scobie, but Jane rubbed it out and said they'd have no name-calling.

"He'll ruin us!" Scobie raged. "There's trade for only one grocer in Shettle, and we've been here forty years. It's a crime! It's—what's he doing now?"

"Special offer, plums at a shilling a tin, three tins for two and ninepence," read Jane. "Dad, you know that case of herrings-in-tomato you bought cheap because they'd been fire-salvaged? Well, I'm going to put them out at sevenpence-ha'penny."

"No!" cried Scobie, and crooked anguished fingers in his thinning hair; but Jane wrote a card all the same and piled the tins in an outside rack.

Jane was a good girl—and pretty enough, with her hair the colour of middle-cut salmon, and her eyes as green as processed peas. But she was too bossy. She was always trying to teach an old adder to suck eggs.

Apart from that they had been very snug here, Scobie thought . . . until the notice had appeared in the empty window opposite, *Watch for the Opening Date! Mace & Mace, Family Grocers & Provision Merchants.* Ever since, Scobie had been watching the window with the goggle-eyed concentration of a man having his throat cut, which was exactly what Jerry Mace was doing to him.

The young brigand had come out now, to spy on Jane. Wearing a white housecoat and horn-rimmed spectacles, he looked more like a medical student than a respectable family grocer.

After one cold stare at him, Jane came in with a toss of her flaming head that should have made him cringe. Instead Jerry came across and examined a tin of herrings, palpating it as if for a duodenal with complications.

"'Morning, Mr. Scobie," he called. "What's wrong with these?"

"Put that tin down or I'll send for the police," Scobie fumed. "I've lost stuff like that before."

"Tin rusted and battered, label discoloured, no key." The young man was dispassionately clinical. "H'm. Push them as cat's food, Mr. Scobie, and they'll go. 'Give your pussy a treat for tea. . . .'"

"Mr. Mace, your tins of plums are exploding," Jane said.

"Only a motor-bike backfiring." Jerry gave her a warm smile. "I've really come to see if we can't reach some price agreement." He turned to Scobie. "My idea, Mr. Scobie, is that when I drop eggs, you leave them alone but cut your bacon, and of course vice-versa. Shettle wives are keen shoppers. We'd all benefit."

"They used to buy their bacon *and* eggs from me," Scobie snapped.

"They didn't, Mr. Scobie. Your prices were too high. They went to Cornfold, reckoning to cover the bus fare on what they saved. Now they're shopping in Shettle because prices are down, and if you'll co-operate we can keep them here."

"Suicide pacts are illegal," Scobie said. "Carry on like this and we'll both be bankrupt."

"Not us, Mr. Scobie, because mother has capital. That's why we're Mace and Mace. I suggested Mace and Son, but she said it would be copying you as you're Scobie and Son." He looked hard at Jane. "Was there some mistake?"

"Young man," said Scobie, "my father started this business before your mother had the misfortune to meet your father. If you knew your job, you'd be behind your counter."

"Well, think it over," Jerry Mace said. "Firewood at fourpence a bundle? Phew! I can do it for threepence."

"No doubt you use your head," Jane said sweetly. "You started this fight, Mr. Mace, and believe me, we'll finish it."

Brave words, Scobie thought, but they buttered no biscuits. He couldn't afford a price-war, and the Maces obviously could. The mother was a smart little woman, with good jewellery and one of those yappy little feather duster dogs that usually went with money . . . lots of it.

Perhaps he had been too short with the young man?

Scobie scratched his chin and looked speculatively at his daughter, thinking it was time she married. Then he could sell the business, which she refused to allow him to do, and retire to the seaside. Of course she was too good for Jerry Mace, but her future in grocery and provisions would be assured.

It could be done. Young Jerry had looked at her as if she were very high-class goods.

"Jane, my dear, you ought to take more time off," Scobie said kindly. "I hate to see you working so hard. Why don't you have an afternoon off tomorrow, and buy yourself some nice new clothes?"

Jane gazed at him in concern. "Dad, are you feeling all right?"

"Never better," he said sharply. "Anyone would think I didn't pay you a fair wage. But," he hastily nipped any argument, "I've been meaning to give you a bonus. Could you use £25?"

"Could I not!" Jane gave him a hug and a kiss. "But I thought we were ruined?"

"I was only pulling the boy's leg," Scobie said tolerantly. "He doesn't seem a bad sort—a bit fresher than his eggs, but a youngster should be keen. I've been thinking it would be neighbourly to have him and his mother over."

"If you offer the olive branch," Jane said, "he'll probably chop it up and sell it at threepence a bundle, after searching it for any olives."

It sounded discouraging, but Scobie decided to bring the young people together and let Nature do the rest. In the morning he strolled across and complimented Jerry on the appearance of his Cheddars and Cheshires.

"Bring a half of each and we'll be pleased to give you and your mother supper tonight," he invited. "We can manage the bread and pickled

**"Firewood at fourpence a bundle?" said Jerry. "I can do it for threepence." Jane said sweetly: "No doubt you use your head"**

THREE SUPERB SHORT STORIES

MEN OF THE NIGHT
*by F. W. Holiday*

UNCLE CONAL AND THE STATE OF NATURE *by Hugh Michael Hogan*

FACE OF DEATH
*by Olaf Ruhen*

IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK

onions." He laughed, to show it was a joke. "Can you come? Jane doesn't see any reason why rivals can't be friends."

"A sensible girl," said Jerry. "And a very pretty one, if I may say so. We'll be delighted. I'm sure I can speak for my mother."

Scobie went back, rubbing his hands.

"Don't do that, Dad," Jane said crossly. "It makes you look like the traditional grocer. I'm off to Cornfold."

"Have a good time, and buy anything you want," Scobie called. "I've invited the Maces to supper tonight. Jerry was delighted. . . ."

In the late afternoon Jane came back in a van from which she and the driver carried a six-foot refrigerated display counter. "This'll knock 'em cold, Dad." She was flushed with triumph. "You told me to buy anything I wanted, and this is it. Only £25 down."

"Down?" he echoed.

"And four similar payments. It'll pay for itself; and I just couldn't resist it."

Scobie groaned and sliced the supper ham thin. . . .

JANE hadn't bought any clothes, but Scobie had to admit later that she looked very charming in a butter-yellow frock. He could see Mrs. Mace was impressed, and when he caught her eye, he sensed an ally. The smile that passed between them was conspiratorial.

"How sweet of you to invite us, Mr. Scobie," she murmured. "Being newcomers, we haven't made many friends. Jerry is always so busy."

"A fine lad," Scobie said. "Full of bright ideas, and we need them to keep the cash registers ringing." He paused. "I wish Jane would go out more, but she's happiest in the shop. Knows more about the trade than I do."

"Such a pretty girl," Mrs. Mace enthused. "It's nice to see two young people getting on so well together."

"Like bacon and eggs," Scobie agreed.

Then he heard his daughter's indignant voice. "One month's credit or a two per cent discount for cash?" she was saying to Jerry "I'll take that up with the suppliers. Why should *you* get preferential treatment?"

Scobie coughed, and suggested supper. The plates of ham glowed pink and white like a cloudy sunset. It was the sort of ham that melted in the mouth, but it seemed to give Jerry a pang of mental indigestion. "If I may make a suggestion," he said, "a slightly *under*-cooked ham saves loss by evaporation and increases the profit margin because it weighs heavier."

"Our customers like their ham properly cooked," Jane said.

Scobie hurriedly mooted the subject of a price agreement. "Too much pruning kills the tree," he said jovially. "Wouldn't it be better business, Jerry, if, instead of you dropping your eggs to 3s. 9d., I raised mine to 4s. 3d.? Then, at 4s., yours will still be a tempting buy."

"With me giving you *quid pro quo?*" the young man mused. "You've got something there. After all, it's the bargain that counts, isn't it, Miss Scobie?"

"Call her Jane," suggested Scobie.

"It's the price that counts," Jane said. "I prefer pruning to graft. Give me fair competition, Mr. Mace. . . ."

"Do call him Jerry, dear," Mrs. Mace urged.

". . . And I won't complain," Jane went on. "But try to jockey me out and I'll ride you off the rails. You know what a fair profit margin should be. Slice it too thin, and you'll cut your fingers."

Jerry said: "Are you telling me how to run my business?"

"How not to run it. And don't imagine we're scared. We love a fight, don't we, Dad?"

"No," said Scobie, "we don't. You listen——"

But Mrs. Mace was signalling to him to leave them to it. "Let them quarrel," she advised, in the next room. "It's the surest way of bringing young people together."

"My wife and I had a frightful row just before I proposed," Scobie remembered. "You and I are business people, Mrs. Mace, and I think we have the same idea of—shall we say a union of interests? Jane needs a strong-minded husband."

"If only I could get Jerry married," sighed Mrs. Mace, "I'd be able to retire to the seaside. But I can't leave him alone."

"Good heavens, I'm in the same predicament," Scobie exclaimed. "I'd retire tomorrow, but Jane won't let me sell."

They took Mrs. Mace's feather-duster dog for an airing, wistfully discussing the merits of Bournemouth and Eastbourne as places of retirement. They stayed out as long as they could but, when Scobie returned, he found Jane had been in bed an hour.

"Lock up, Dad, and don't be late," she called. "Saturday rush tomorrow."

Jerry Mace wasn't so rushed that he couldn't come over early, on the flimsy pretext that he'd left his spectacles. They couldn't be found, but Jane helped him search.

"What are your lettuces, Jerry?" she asked.

"A shilling, Jane, but I'll drop them to tenpence when they go limp."

Scobie rubbed his hands. Jerry and Jane. Bacon and eggs.

He was composing a witty little speech to make at the wedding breakfast when he saw his daughter had suddenly gone crazy. She had knocked twopence off butter, slashed the lettuces to ninepence, massacred the prunes, and was making a special Saturday offer of eggs at 3s. 6d. Shoppers flocked in, and as Scobie served he had an alarming glimpse of Jerry glowering across from an empty shop. "He can't see our prices because I've got his specs," Jane explained.

Scobie was aghast. It wasn't fair trading. It certainly wasn't love. Reprisals would follow. . . .

They did. Hiring relays of small boys to bring him the latest intelligence, Jerry counter-attacked with such sensational reductions that a policeman had to control traffic while excited Shettle housewives shuttled to and fro across the street, and others on their way to Cornfold from outlying villages joined in the rush.

Scobie rather hoped he was ruined, because another day like this would certainly kill him. As it happened, it nearly killed Jerry, for he was coming across to protest when he tripped over a kerb he didn't see and had to be helped into his shop with a twisted ankle.

"He's as blind as a bat without his glasses," Scobie accused Jane. "Are you satisfied now?"

Jane looked ashamed. When they closed she went across and didn't return for an hour. "You'll have to carry on alone for a week," Dad," she told him. "I shall be over there."

"You're going to nurse him?"

"Don't be silly. I've offered to look after the shop, as I hold myself responsible for his accident."

"A fine gesture," said Scobie.

"Not at all. It's good business. I've been longing to find out how Jerry runs that place—his methods are more modern than yours."

Towards the end of the week Mrs. Mace looked in. "I think they've fallen in love," she said. "Jerry can't keep his eyes off her."

"He may be making sure she doesn't sabotage things," Scobie suggested, "but I must admit there's a sort of rosy glow about her. It *could* be love. The trouble is, she also loves a fight."

"She could still have one if they were married," Mrs. Mace said soothingly.

At midday on Saturday Jane reported that Jerry had recovered sufficiently to carry on without her.

"Without you?" Scobie echoed. "Is that all you have to tell me?"

"No, I've got half a notebook full of data," she confided. "He gets his bacon direct from Ireland, buys his jams in quantity, packets his own tea and. . . ."

"Jane," said Scobie, "I've something to tell *you*. I've accepted an offer from Cornfold Co-op to take over at a good price, s.a.v., and possession in a month. And I've you to thank for it. One of their top men saw the roaring trade we did last Saturday, and it's all fixed."

"Dad, you can't! It isn't fair. . . ."

"You shall have your share," Scobie promised. "And if you don't want to come to the seaside, they're eager for you to stay on."

"I mean it isn't fair to Jerry," she said.

"Was he fair to me? Don't you worry about him, girl. We'll be sitting pretty at the seaside, listening to the band, maybe, while he fights for his life. I wouldn't be in his shoes. . . . Hi, where are you going?"

"To tell Jerry you're stabbing him in the back," she called. "It's treachery. I'm on his side, Dad, and I shan't forgive you for this."

Scobie thought she would. So did Mrs. Mace, who came over to congratulate him.

"Tears and kisses," she said happily. "Jerry almost forgot to open after the lunch hour, but now they're behind the same counter, planning what to do to the Co-op, I'm giving Jerry the shop as a wedding present."

"Room for two," said Scobie. "I almost wish I could stay to see the fun, but. . . ."

"Eastbourne?" queried Mrs. Mace.

"I haven't quite made up my mind."

"Nor have I, about Bournemouth. I hear Hove is bracing."

"Isn't that strange, so do I," lied Scobie.

They looked at one another with understanding. There was no hurry, now the major problem was settled. But partnerships seemed to be in the air.

THE END

With his living quarters in tow, Tom House rumbles off to a new job. His personal long distance speed record is thirty-seven miles in ten hours

# Puffing nomad of our roads

*Once a steamroller raced a Spitfire and won. For Tom House's tour of Britain, four miles an hour is fast enough*

by RENÉ LECLER

WHEN, two summers ago, Tom House was told to drive his ten-ton steamroller down a newly derequisitioned War Department coastal road near Studland, Dorset, and consolidate its foundations, the job sounded a pleasant routine one.

He was nearing the beach when he saw the edges of the old road collapse under the weight of the roller. A large boulder crashed to within two feet of the machine and he scrambled down from his cab to look at it. He was trying to move it with a shovel when he suddenly drew back. The boulder was in fact a large, live mine left over from the war.

"I stood there for a second frightened out of my wits," House says. "I did not dare move the roller. Finally I ran to the nearest house and telephoned the army."

A mine disposal unit later discovered that the mine was the first of thirteen, six of which were linked to detonate at the same time.

A few months ago House stopped by the side of a stream near a large West Country town to pump 180 gallons of water into the auxiliary tank. Within five minutes the roller had become a strange sight as it puffed down the road belching out clouds of billowing white spray and blowing bubbles into House's cab.

"Some of the locals thought this was very funny and one of them called me 'Bubbles'," says House. "I found that the stream had contained a large proportion of waste detergent from a nearby factory, and I had to spend two days cleaning out the tubes and valves."

A short and wiry, fifty-year-old Dorset man, whose face is the colour of pale mahogany, House has been driving steamrollers for fifteen years for Eddison Plant Limited, whose headquarters are at Belton, near Grantham.

With thirteen area depots and a fleet of five hundred road rollers, one hundred of which are still powered by steam instead of diesel engines, the firm has the largest fleet of rollers for hire in the world. The most popular roller weighs eight to ten tons, is ten feet high and twenty-two feet long and has a maximum speed of about five miles an hour.

House and his fellow drivers have helped to re-surface practically every main road in the country. They have "rolled" London Airport, the approaches to Calder Hall atomic power station, the banks of reservoirs in the Welsh hills and most of Britain's dockyards.

Jobs last a long time—House once worked for seven months on the same stretch of by-pass—and it may take drivers many days to get to them. One man spent seven weeks on the road from London to Glencoe Pass in Scotland, and House once covered 180 miles, from his Dorchester depot to Penzance, in a fortnight, stopping for water every four miles.

House's own long-distance speed record stands at thirty-seven miles in ten hours and, when on a distant assignment, he tows his own home with him, a twelve foot by six double-walled wooden caravan sturdily built on iron wheels. This in turn tows a 180-gallon water tank. Hills are the steamroller driver's worst enemies. Because of its smooth iron rollers the machine

*Continued on page 42*

**House and his wife, Dorothy, raised two of their four children in the van behind the roller. Now they have a home at Dorchester**

# WAY OF THE COUNTRY

*Morgan was safari king: he could kill anything with a gun. How dare this boy from an office desk defy him!*

THE reeds were full of wild ducks gliding about, wagging their perky tails and jerking their heads as if they'd been clockwork toys. Their brilliant colours had the varnished look of fresh paint on wood; lovely, but unreal somehow.

"I suppose they've all got their own names: mallards, pintails, that kind of thing."

The moment he had spoken, Clement Hardy wished he hadn't. Harriet was unpacking picnic things and didn't hear, or didn't answer, but of course Pip Morgan did. It was probably imagination, but Clem thought he perceived a slight lift of the other man's eyebrows. To Pip, such ignorance would seem ridiculous.

Harriet's thin brown hands moved as neatly as humming birds and her ruffled hair was falling over her eyes—like a bronze chrysanthemum, Clem had told her once. Their two dogs lay firmly on the rug she'd spread for the picnic: Rufus the handsome red setter; Vicky the spry, wiry little terrier.

"Will you dispense the drinks, Podge? Orange squash or beer, and coffee in the flask."

Clem frowned, and grabbed the basket morosely. Podge—he hated that ridiculous nickname. It had pursued him from school days. When Harriet first heard it, they'd laughed fit to bust—he'd thought it funny, too. Heaven help him, he'd even liked her using the miserable word. Of course, they'd been engaged then. Madly in love.

And now? He looked up at her and his heart gave a sort of jerk, like the tractor when he started it on a cold morning. She tossed back her chrysanthemum hair with a gesture that seemed to twist his insides. Then he swore. The beer had frothed out over his trouser-leg.

"Take it steady, old man," Pip advised. "I've a thirst like a rhinoceros."

He flicked a stone on to the water below them with a graceful offhand gesture that, unreasonably, irritated Clem. Of course that stone would do exactly what it was told by Pip Morgan, the great hunter, the slayer of lions and elephants, the popular safari king, the successful farmer. Everything Pip did was efficient; everything came his way. And, of course, women ate out of his hand. Even Harriet, too practical herself to be taken in by his self-conscious charms, respected him enormously. Efficiency always impressed her.

She was sitting on her heels now, looking down over the reed-fringed dam—their dam—that shone like a great blue zircon in the sun; over the bush and forest that crowded darkly to its reedy edge; over the wide valley beyond to the distant, grape-coloured hills, dappled with a deeper purple where cloud shadows fell across the furrowed flanks.

What a view! The country lying in the sun at their feet was like some vast, sunlit, magnificent diorama, and as empty as the Promised Land before the Israelites poured into it. Flowing with milk and honey, maybe—but first you had to bring in the cows and the bees. And then the cows would succumb to East Coast fever, the bees would sting. . . .

"I remember when a pair of lions lay up in this gully," Pip Morgan said. He glanced at Clem. "That was before your predecessor put in the dam. It was all bush then. One night they killed five of my calves."

"What happened to them?" Harriet asked.

"What you'd expect. The lion was easy—a big, black-maned chap. He just stood there and asked for it."

"And the lioness?"

"She played me up a bit. I had to take a running shot and broke her shoulder. She came at me just by the big cedar over there. Like greased lightning. Ever had a lion come at you, Clem?"

Morgan was doing it deliberately, of course—taunting the new boy, the refugee from office desks and city pavements. Clem was only recently out from home, very new to this land.

"Often," Clem replied with acid in his tone. "There used to be a pride of them in the Town Hall, lying up mostly in the Rates Office. And as for getting home at night—the bus stop by the Odeon was the worst place. Haunted by them."

PIP smiled condescendingly, as if at a child—and it *was* childish, Clem supposed. But something in Pip's suave, self-assured manner frayed his nerves. Pip behaved as if he owned not only two thousand acres next door to Clem's three hundred, but all Africa as well.

"Coffee, Podge, please," Harriet said tersely. She was annoyed. She'd once reminded him that it was futile to quarrel with neighbours. "And Pip's helped us a lot," she'd said. "There's nothing phoney about him. He's right at the top of the tree."

*Almost a superman, in fact,* Clem thought. Yet why should it seem so ultra-capable merely to kill inoffensive animals more efficiently than most people—to be, in fact, a sort of open-air butcher? Clem played with Rufus's silky ear and wondered how you could love dogs and love slaughtering birds and antelopes at the same time. It didn't make sense to him.

Pip Morgan's twelve-bore lay by his side. Even nowadays, when lions and buffaloes, not to mention smaller game, had retreated before the farmers' ploughs and fences, Pip always took a gun about with him. And while Clem sipped his beer, he saw Pip's hand tighten on the stock.

"A spur-winged goose," Pip remarked, his hard blue eyes fixed on some distant object beyond the reeds. In another instant he was on his feet, gun in hand, without, it seemed, having made any effort.

Harriet turned in alarm as Clem sprang up and pushed aside Pip's gun. "Half a minute," he said. "The dam is on my land."

Pip looked at him, astonished. "No one's disputing that, old man."

"So it's my spur-winged goose, I suppose."

"Of course," Pip said. "It's all yours, and you'll enjoy it. They're good eating, if you hang them long enough."

"I don't want it shot."

There was a pause—a pause of astonished disbelief. Clem himself could hardly believe that he had given such an order to Pip Morgan, who stood with a faint, puzzled smile on his face.

Harriet broke the short silence. "Darling, does it matter? You know a bird's always welcome for the pot."

Morgan had flushed a little under his sunburn and the smile left his face. "Let me get this straight," he said. "Are you saying this is your dam and no one else is to shoot birds on it?"

"You get the point exactly," Clem said.

Pip shrugged and slowly, deliberately laid the gun on the grass. "Ever since Bancroft built the dam, we've shot over it," he said, his voice flat and brittle. "He was a decent chap and a good neighbour. I'm afraid it didn't occur to me that you'd altered the rules. Ah, well. Times change."

Harriet was frowning—she was angry now, Clem knew. And the realization depressed him

**Harriet turned in alarm as Clem sprang up and pushed aside Pip's gun. "Half a minute," she heard Clem say, "the dam is on my land"**

*by* ***ELSPETH HUXLEY***

ILLUSTRATED BY WYLES

still more. Harriet was devoted to him—she never left anyone in doubt about that—but she rarely took his side these days. She hated to see him making a fool of himself. She hated her husband behaving like a city tenderfoot—especially when there were people like Pip Morgan around.

He munched a sandwich with an air of blank indifference, all the while cursing himself for a clumsy idiot. He hadn't meant to be unneighbourly, boorish and rude. There had come over him, quite genuinely, a feeling of disgust for all this killing, and regret for all the slaughtered lions and antelopes that had populated these grassy slopes and bush-clad gullies.

They had meant no evil. Man, the intruder, had dealt out death, and now the country was sad and almost empty of the wild life that had once been its glory. Now and again, perhaps, a leopard might venture down from the forest, or a pair of reed-buck seek shelter in the long, tawny grass; but, by and large, Pip Morgan and his kind had wiped out the animals. Only the birds had managed to survive. And now Morgan was after the birds too.

But Clem hadn't the courage to say all this. Pip would only laugh at him and even Harriet would think he'd gone soft. The picnic lunch, to which she'd so much looked forward, had failed dismally. And it was all his fault. . . .

It was time for the afternoon's business to begin. He and Pip had come to mark out the precise boundary line between their two farms. Both had maps on thick blue tracing paper, and once upon a time surveyor's beacons had been planted in the long grass. But, in the years when Clem's farm had lain unoccupied, many of the angle-irons had vanished. So they had now to translate their maps into an actual line across country, where a fence could be put in.

"I've brought an old man with me," Pip remarked, "who says he remembers where the beacons used to be. Of course I don't expect you to take his word for it, but he may be useful."

Clem had an impulse to say: "I'm sorry. Let's forget it. I didn't mean to be a so-and-so." But Harriet was close by, and he was damned if he'd grovel. So he simply said, with equal curtness: "Very well."

A SINGLE rusty angle-iron was still in place among the reeds at the bottom corner of the farm. Starting from this, they were to work their way upwards, driving in a fencing stake to mark each agreed position, until they reached the top corner, up against the forest.

The boundary ran through rough, uncleared country, with bush and long grass up to their waists, rocky gullies and, in places, tongues of surviving forest.

The old man who remembered the survey led the way. His name was Manvi. Long ago, in childhood, the lobes of his ears had been pierced and gradually the hole enlarged until the rim could be looped up over the top of the ear, to keep it from dangling to his shoulders.

Manvi carried a staff and wore a tattered pair of shorts, a red blanket hitched like a toga over one shoulder, and a pair of sandals made from motor tyres. He led the way, and two African farm hands brought up the rear.

Manvi led the party to a tall cedar that had at some time been struck by lightning. One side was dead, but the other still bore thin, dark-green leaves hung with grey lichen. Manvi jabbered volubly in his own language to Pip and Harriet, who both understood it. Clem was learning only slowly—too slowly; his tongue fumbled over the long, liquid sounds.

Had he made a ghastly blunder, Clem wondered—not for the first time—by giving up his safe, manageable job with an insurance company, his holidays-with-pay and sickness benefit and pension rights, for this unfamiliar life in Africa, so full of snags and pitfalls; by forsaking the cosy, companionable office life—the warming, gossipy cups of tea, the chat about


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**THE AMAZING STORY OF**

# HITLER'S WARTIME SPIES IN BRITAIN

**by Charles Wighton and Gunter Peis**


so-and-so's promotion, the neat little semi-detached with garage and garden he might have had, to plunge into the uncertainties of farming here?

It made him so dependent on his wife; that was one trouble. For Harriet was a local girl, born and bred in the country. And it made him feel a fool in the presence of old hands like Pip Morgan. *And rightly, too,* he thought morosely. Perhaps he *had* been a fool, an idiotic fool.

"Manvi remembers the surveyor sitting on this tree," Harriet explained. "Then the line went left-handed"—she pointed—"and there was a beacon just across the gully over there."

"Satisfied?" Pip inquired.

Clem nodded. What else could he do? And Pip took out a hunting-knife to blaze the bark of the tree.

Rufus and the other dog, Vicky, had ranged ahead. A few minutes later Clem heard them barking excitedly in the gully.

"Perhaps they've put up a reed-buck," Harriet suggested.

"More likely a native pi-dog," Pip said. "Or possibly a porcupine."

"Oh, I hope not. They can blind a dog with their quills."

"We'll catch up with them," Pip said.

They walked on to the edge of the gully. Manvi patted a boulder with the flat of his hand, speaking emphatically; *like a Roman senator giving an oration,* Clem thought.

The dogs could be heard more plainly now, down among the bush and boulders, but there was nothing to be seen. The gully was perhaps a hundred yards across and fairly deep. This was a part of the farm that hadn't yet been developed—a patch of raw Africa still.

All at once the barking took on a different note, almost hysterical.

"They're on to something," Harriet said.

The barking grew more frenzied and continuous, as if they had a cat up a tree. Clem was worried by the idea of a porcupine. He'd heard that they could shoot their quills out backwards, riddling an attacker's face with sharp weapons the size of knitting-needles. He said: "I think I'll investigate."

Morgan looked up from his map. "No need to panic. We'll be down there in a minute or two."

Clem seized a fencing stake, a heavy cedar post six feet long, and suffered a momentary impulse to crack it down on Pip's skull to wipe off that insolent, self-assured, half-contemptuous expression. Instead he strode off.

Harriet called out: "Mind your ankle, Podge." She meant it kindly—he'd twisted an ankle not long ago, running after a heifer—but it annoyed him even more. Pip Morgan never turned his ankle over, he felt sure.

It was hot in the gully. Up in these African highlands the air had a tang and sparkle and was never sultry, but the sun could bite and sting. Clem had got over the raw-beetroot stage of sunburn, but still found the glare hard on eyes brought up to rainy skies and shaded streets. Using the heavy stake to batter creepers and branches out of his way, he pushed on towards the barking, calling out to the dogs.

The barking suddenly stopped. The silence that followed seemed full of menace. Birds, even insects, were still. He was out of range of his companions' voices. The only sounds were the scraping of dry grass against his trouser-legs, the rattle of a stone dislodged by his foot and his own panting.

"Rufus! Vicky! Here, come!"

He tried to whistle, but was too much out of breath. His voice sounded flat and somehow impertinent in all this emptiness and silence.

The yell came suddenly—a high, searing sound like tearing calico. It froze his feet where they stood.

There was a gurgle and a yelp, and then the barking started up again. This time it was frantic, at once frightened and desperate. It wasn't so much barking as snarling magnified.

The dogs were in danger, he knew that. And at least one was hurt.

*The gun,* he thought. He'd better go back to fetch Pip Morgan and the gun. But that would mean delay in which anything might happen; whatever it was the dogs were worrying wouldn't wait. Besides, he was damned if he was going to run to Pip Morgan like a child to its mother.

He plunged forward towards the sound. Everything seemed to rise up to obstruct him: thickets, branches, creepers, even stones that skidded under his feet. It must be something much worse than a porcupine. A savage wild-cat? A snake? *Not a snake,* he prayed, gripping the stake. Snakes made him sick with an aversion even stronger than fear.

And then, as he burst out of a thicket, he saw the dogs, crouched under a tree. Vicky's thick, whitish hair was stained with brown, and one of her ears was hanging by a thread. She was bloody, but alive, gripped by the last primeval instinct of self-defence. Rufus's eyes were rolling, his mouth frothing, every hackle on end. He sank back into the ground to gather strength and launched himself into the air.

A few inches out of reach, on a low branch, was poised his enemy. It was a nonchalant, graceful poise, almost unconcerned. Only two things moved: the long, whip-like black-tipped tail that flicked from side to side as rhythmical as a pendulum, but quicker, a sight as menacing as doom: and the beast's opaque yellow eyes, burning like intense, unflickering fires.

Even at this moment of terror, Clem was awed by the beast's marvellous beauty. The animal was a perfectly composed symphony of strength, grace and ferocity.

Rufus, dry-throated in his frenzy, leaped again. A single buffet from that steel-muscled paw would have sent him spinning, as Vicky had been served. Clem marvelled that the crouching

*Continued on page 51*

# RESCUE FROM DEVIL'S ISLAND

**An innocent man was trapped in the world's most vicious prison. I set out to free him from this tropical hell of violence and hatred**

by WILLIAM WILLIS

On the fierce morning heat I stood on the waterfront of Albina, a tiny settlement in Dutch Guiana, and stared across the mile-wide Maroni river. On the opposite bank, in French Guiana, lay Devil's Island—the world's most notorious penal colony. I had pledged myself to rescue an innocent prisoner.

My problem was to find him among 7,500 convicts. I needed a guide. An ideal man for the job, I decided, would be a *libéré*—a convict who had served his sentence of forced labour but was compelled under French law to remain in the colony for the same length of time as his sentence. He would be free to move around unsuspected. My task was so dangerous, though, that the *libéré* would have to be absolutely trustworthy. Did such a man exist across the river in St. Laurent, the colony's main prison camp?

A Chinese shopkeeper with whom I had become friendly answered this question. "Jules will be your guide," he said. "I have known him for many years. My boy will take you to him."

A bush Negro paddled the boy and me across to the little pier where the motor-launch ferry tied up. The customs officer there examined my passport and said coldly: "You come often to St. Laurent?"

"Yes," I said. "It's a good place to drink. Liquor in Albina costs from five to ten times as much. Soon I'm going upriver, and then I won't trouble you any more."

He returned my passport and told me to go on, but I felt that I was suspect.

The Chinese boy took me to the landing-place used by the bush Negroes and told me to wait. Near me sat some *libérés*, gazing upon the river, ragged, starved and motionless. Against the powerfully muscled, glossy-skinned Negroes they made a pathetic contrast.

Soon the boy returned. A man walked by his side, wearing the customary clothing of a *libéré*—a thin undershirt with sleeves to the elbows and blue dungarees rolled up to the knees. An old grey felt hat was on his head. He was bare-footed like most of the *libérés* and had large, spreading toes. I took his age to be about fifty-five.

"This is Jules," the boy said with a smile. Then he left, and Jules and I stood alone.

Trying to size him up, I said in French: "I am a stranger here and would like to see as much as possible of St. Laurent while I have the chance." To explain my presence in the district I lied, saying that I was a miner searching for gold.

"I am afraid there is not much to see in St. Laurent, monsieur," said Jules. "In one hour perhaps you will have seen everything."

We turned from the river and began to walk. "How long have you been in the colony?" I asked.

"Almost thirty years."

I realized with a shock that I was not dealing with an ordinary Frenchman, but with one who had been convicted of a serious crime. An enormous gulf seemed to lie between us. Was there any chance of really getting to know him, or anyone like him?

We entered a bar run by an Italian *libéré*, and ordered a bottle of wine. "There must be many *libérés* in St. Laurent," I said.

"About seven or eight hundred."

"Do all the colony's *libérés* live in St. Laurent?"

"No, monsieur," said Jules. "Some are scattered around in other camps." Again I studied his face. Was he the man who could help me? So far he had made a good impression.

Willis disguised himself as a *libéré*—a "free" convict—and lived as one on jungle islands

A man dressed as a *libéré* sat down near us. When he ordered a glass of wine, Jules caught my eye and put a finger to his lips. We finished our bottle and went out into the street. "Who was that?" I asked.

"A spy."

"A *libéré*?"

"No. A man sent here from the Sûreté in France."

"I have nothing to hide, Jules."

"No doubt, monsieur, but it is wise not to be overheard talking in St. Laurent."

As we went down the Avenue de la République we saw a *libéré* sitting on the kerb, bent over so much that nothing of his head showed except some tangled hair. His clothes were rags.

"Why does he sit right in the sun?" I asked. "The sun will kill him."

"He is dead already. He has sat there all night and all day yesterday."

"I have seen others like him," I said.

"Yes, monsieur, there are others. . . ."

I began sounding Jules out. I asked: "How do prisoners set about escaping?"

"A convict in the prison has to contact someone outside to get him a canoe and provisions," he said. "It is easy enough, if he has the money. The trouble is that he is apt to be betrayed or cheated."

Jules told me that a thousand francs—then worth about £6—would buy a canoe. "Then one must have a water keg, a paddle

or two and a machete—a big knife like a cutlass. And one must set aside at least two hundred francs for food."

While we walked I questioned Jules further. He had an alert mind and was no doubt wondering who I was and what I wanted.

"Have you been in St. Laurent throughout all your thirty years here?" I asked.

"No, monsieur. I have been in every camp in the colony, from the Silver Mountain camp in the interior near Brazil, which is closed now, to Oyapoc, beyond Cayenne."

When we came to a road branching from the bamboo-lined street he stopped and said quietly: "That is *La Route Zéro*—The Road to Nowhere. Convicts worked on it for fifty years, and thousands of them died in the swamps, but it was never finished. It's supposed to go to Cayenne. I worked on it myself. One day I sank in up to my head and would have disappeared completely if fellow-convicts had not grabbed me. They broke my arm pulling me out."

We found a place to eat and escape from the fierce heat. I bent towards Jules and said in a whisper. "Tell me, if you had a brother or a good friend here who wanted to escape, would you help him?"

He glanced away as if he had not heard my question. Then he turned, looked me straight in the eyes, and said: "Yes, monsieur."

"I thought so, Jules. I am merely asking a question. In a few days I am going up the Maroni to a mine," I said. "I would like to have someone come along to work for me—a white man; somebody whom I could trust. I would pay well. The mine is on the Dutch side of the river, about three days' travel from here."

Jules's face remained expressionless.

"Would you like to come along and work for me?" I asked.

"Yes, if you want me to."

"It would be against the law, of course, for a *libéré* to leave the colony. . . . ."

"Nobody would know, monsieur. I've been away from the colony before." He told me that he had a canoe and sometimes paddled over to Albina to sell butterflies or a few brooms made by *libérés*. I suspected—rightly, as it turned out—that he also did some smuggling for the Chinese store-keepers in St. Laurent.

When it was time for me to go back to Albina he said: "You have been watched since you stepped out of the canoe. In fact, both of us have been watched. I expect the police commandant to send for me tomorrow and ask me about you."

"Tell him that I am a miner who came over here for a few drinks and merely walked around a bit."

"That is what I will tell him. Then tomorrow evening I will paddle over to Albina and see you."

"Do you know where I am staying?"

A trace of a smile came to his gnarled face. "I will find out, monsieur. I know Albina as well as St. Laurent."

I gave him my hand and he took it, startled for a moment, after thirty years of being an outcast, by my display of comradeship. His hand was hesitant and ready to be withdrawn.

*So this*, I thought, *is a French convict*.

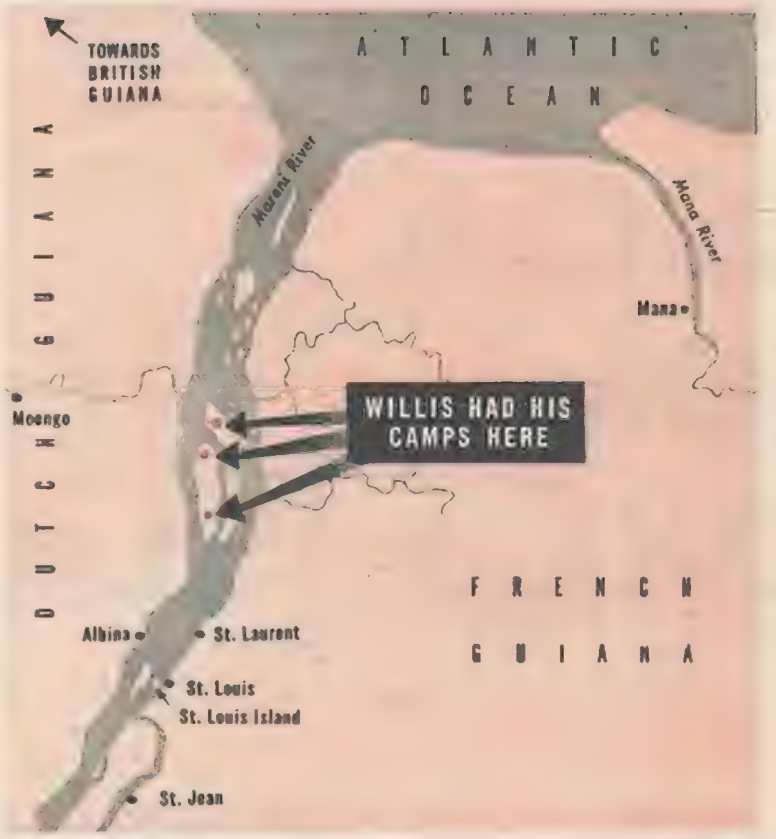
I liked his voice and I liked his face. I had confidence in him. He was the guide I needed.

Soon I was back at the landing-place, where the Negro, the Chinese boy and the canoe were waiting. . . .

MY search for the innocent convict, which was to bring me some of the most terrifying moments of my life, had begun in New York City earlier in that summer of 1938. I, an American sailor who had first gone to sea at the age of fifteen, was ashore, convalescing after an accident to my back.

I took a room in a lodging house owned by a Madame Carnot. She herself lived in the basement with her daughter, Jeanne, who worked as a salesgirl in a shop. They had lived in America for about ten years.

One evening I went down to




**The Maroni River area of French Guiana, known as Devil's Island. Prison camps were set up all over the colony**

Madame Carnot's little living-room to pay my rent. She was alone. As usual, she asked me to sit for a while. The light was rather dim, but I could see that she had been weeping. Then Jeanne came in and I saw that her eyes also were red. An envelope with a foreign stamp lay on the table. Beside it was a ragged-looking letter.

Neither of them spoke to me. Eventually I got up, saying: "Obviously you have had bad news. I am sorry that I disturbed you."

"No, no—please stay," Jeanne said quickly. "That letter is from my brother."

Realizing that she wanted to talk, I sat down again.

"I did not know you had a brother," I said.

She looked at her mother, who sat exhausted with grief. "My brother is in French Guiana, monsieur."

"The penal colony?" I asked.

"Yes, monsieur. He is a convict." She told me her brother's story.

It happened in a small French town about fifty miles south-east of Bordeaux. Madame Carnot kept an hotel. She lived alone with her two children—Bernard, who was nearly eighteen, and Jeanne, who was twelve. Her husband had died in the first World War.

At 3 a.m. one day Bernard, who served behind the bar, returned with some friends from a dance. The dance had broken up in a fight. Bernard and a companion had black eyes.

The boys paused in front of the little hotel and one of them persuaded Bernard that they ought to have a final glass of wine.

Bernard locked the door after the party had entered. Then he lit the lamp, went behind the bar, drew some wine from a barrel and filled some glasses.

Later four men entered the same street. They were the town's most prominent lawyer and three of his friends, who had just come from a party.

They staggered a little and talked loudly. The lawyer was in a quarrelsome mood.

When they reached the hotel and saw the lighted bar-room they stopped, pressed their faces against the window and looked in.

"What's this? Drinking at this hour?" the lawyer said. "Those rascals are breaking the law. I'll stop them."

"Don't," said one of his friends. "Let's go in and join them. Our policemen are asleep, I'll swear to that. I can drink a little more and I am sure you can too, messieurs. Come on."

They tried the door. "It's locked," said the lawyer.

"I'll break it if they don't open," growled one of his friends, shaking the handle.

The lawyer rapped on a glass pane. One of the boys went to the door and saw the lawyer's angry face. The lawyer was an important man in the community, and the frightened boy turned the key. The four men trooped in.

"Who opened the door?" Bernard shouted from behind the bar.

"The door was open," the lawyer replied. "It's long past closing time and your bar-room is wide open and selling wine. You don't seem to think much of the law of this town."

"I am not selling wine and the bar-room is not open, monsieur. I locked the door myself," Bernard replied.

Then men and boys began pushing each other and soon a fight developed. Suddenly the lawyer staggered under a blow and fell backwards, striking his head on the edge of a chair. He lay still, sprawled on his back. The police came and then a doctor.

THE police arrested Bernard—even though he protested his innocence—and one of the other boys. The lawyer died a few hours later.

At the trial Bernard was sentenced to banishment in French Guiana; he was regarded as the ringleader in the affair.

The other boy was given six years but died of fever in a hospital at St. Laurent. Before he died he wrote three confessions—one for the governor of the colony, one for Bernard and one for Madame Carnot. They reached their destinations, but the prison authorities did nothing, claiming that he had confessed knowing that he was about to die and could no longer be punished.

Jeanne finished her story. Madame Carnot sat motionless, grief-stricken.

I went out into the night and walked the streets of New York, deep in thought.

Devil's Island. . . .

It's first impact on me had been when I was a little boy. I remembered that Dreyfus, the French Army officer, had been condemned to Devil's Island and after years of suffering was found innocent. Occasionally I had seen reports of escaping convicts fighting to the death in open canoes when crazed by thirst, or being torn to pieces by sharks when their canoes had capsized. Behind the escapes always loomed Devil's Island itself, shrouded in terror and mystery. And on Devil's Island was Bernard Carnot—an innocent man. . . .

Suddenly I resolved that I would go there and help Carnot to escape.

NOW my back was fit again, and I got a passage as an able seaman in a small, old vessel of the Puerto Rican line.

Whenever I had a chance on the trip I exercised to regain the strength in my limbs. I had to be fit. My mission was a raid against the French Government. A prison cell on Devil's Island would be the end of it if I failed. I also studied hard at French to prepare for what was to come.

In San Juan I took a small inter-island vessel to St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands. From there I went to Georgetown, British Guiana, and from there travelled in a Norwegian bauxite carrier to Paramaribo, Dutch Guiana.

A police official came on board, examined my passport and gave me permission to land. Then I picked up my suitcase and walked down the gangway. About a hundred miles away lay Devil's Island.

I was in Paramaribo for several days, wondering how to set about the final stage of my journey. Everybody in town seemed to have heard that I had declared myself on the ship's passenger list as a mining engineer. Dozens of mines were offered me for sale.

Walking along the river-front I saw a Dutch colonial soldier with two white men. The men wore wide-brimmed straw hats, torn, dirty shirts and crude trousers made of sacking which barely reached to their knees. Both of them were barefooted and mudstained, and trudged along wearily. I had never seen such wretched-looking human beings.

"Who are they?" I asked a Negro policeman.

He took his time sizing me up, his good-natured face smiling, then replied in English: "They are *évadés*—escaped French convicts who have been caught. They will be kept in jail here till the coastal steamer running to French Guiana can take them back to Devil's Island."

"It looks as if they have had a hard time of it," I said.

The policeman said sternly: "I have no pity for them. They are worse than animals. When I was stationed in the bush some years ago I saw a convict who had been killed and partly eaten by his comrades. They are murderers and cannibals, all of them."

So that was what Devil's Islanders looked like. And Bernard Carnot was one of them—a figure in rags, dragging himself through the heat for the rest of his life. No wonder I had never seen a smile on Madame Carnot's face.

I had become acquainted with James Lawton, the American Consul in Paramaribo, a square-set, ruddy-faced man with snow-white hair.

He had warned me against going to the Maroni River on account of the fever there and the nearness of French Guiana and its desperate *évadés*, but when I had persisted he made me acquainted with a Mr. Teitelbaum, a local citizen, who gave me written permission to work on his property on the Maroni.

"Have you a gun?" Lawton asked when I visited him after everything had been settled.

"No," I answered.

"You can't go to the Maroni without a gun," he said. "Get a good one. Another thing: you may have occasion to go across the river to the French side." His clear blue eyes reached my face as if to read my mind. "There's the chance of getting into trouble in the penal colony. So always leave behind a letter addressed to me with an order for it to be mailed if you don't come back in a day or two." He raised a finger in warning. "Make sure of that, Mr. Willis. If I receive it I'll cable the State Department and tell them to get busy on your behalf."

In the evening I went to the bar of an hotel where I stayed talking with

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another old-timer in the colony, a Dutchman who owned a few mines. I had just bought a gun from him—an old Smith and Wesson.

"I didn't put those notches on it, the man I got it from did," he explained. "The notches are all French convicts on the Maroni. Let me tell you, my friend; if you don't know how to look out for yourself down there it's just too bad. Don't let a convict come too close—not even if you think he is dying. The convicts are full of tricks. Shoot if you're in doubt; always shoot. There's nobody around to ask you why you did it." He laughed, though his eyes were serious. "You're doing them a favour by putting them out of their misery."

Soon after eight o'clock next morning my boat left Paramaribo to go up-river to Moengo, from where I would have to travel overland to Albina, the Dutch settlement on the Maroni opposite St. Laurent.

At Moengo an elderly woman came on board and took me to a little government-owned bungalow where travellers stayed overnight. She showed me into a room with two beds under mosquito nets. I was to sleep in one. A young Chinese was sitting on the other, already undressed. After a while, when everything had become quiet in the house, he got up and made sure that all the doors were locked.

"I don't want to be killed by any *évadés*," he remarked.

"Do they come to Moengo?" I asked.

"Yes, sometimes they pass through here on their way out of the jungle. They try to get something to eat, or some clothes and, if possible, steal a canoe. But only a few reach Paramaribo. The bush Negroes and Indians watch out for them and get a guilder"—about 2s.—"for every one they capture. The Indians caught one last week and tied him to a tree for the night to take him to Moengo by daylight, but in the morning he was dead."

Early the following morning a battered-looking Ford driven by a Chinese halted outside the bungalow and I climbed aboard for the trip to Albina. I noticed that he had a sawn-off shotgun beside him and another one lashed across the top of the seat. At the edge of Moengo we stopped before the American Aluminium Company's hospital. A Negro in overalls and using two crutches came out, hobbled to the car and got in beside me.

He told me that he was a digger—as goldminers are called.

"How did you break your leg?" I asked.

"It happened in the Maroni river. The river is bad with *évadés*. Every time you go ashore to cook or sleep they try to rob you. I was in a canoe which stopped at an island for the night. Sometime during the night I woke up. *Evadés* were in the camp. They killed two of my companions and one *évadé* hit me on the head with a machete."

The Negro took off his hat and showed me a long cleft on his head, freshly healed. "I ran into the bush and jumped into the river. My foot caught in some rocks. I almost drowned before I pulled myself loose and found that I had broken my leg."

Two hours after leaving Moengo we came to higher ground and then to a clearing. The car stopped. In the distance, through the bushes and trees we could see the Maroni river—and Devil's Island.

Half an hour later we drove into Albina and I took a room in the house of a storekeeper and trader. Albina consisted of little more than one unpaved street lined with shacks, mostly deserted, and a few white-painted Government buildings. There were also two churches, a Catholic school for Indian children and a small radio station, recently installed.

The whole settlement was falling to pieces as a result of the end of the gold-boom at Inini in the hinterland of Guiana, near the Brazilian border.

The following morning came my introduction to Devil's Island.

After breakfast, the trader with whom I was staying remarked that the ferry was going across to St. Laurent and that I could go in it for the ride if I wanted to.

On the ferry I chatted to a middle-aged Chinaman sitting beside me. "Do the convicts walk around in the streets?" I asked him.

"The convicts of the first class—street cleaners and houseboys—do," he replied, "but the majority work under guard on the farms, in the woods, in the shops and on the roads. All are condemned to forced labour." He pulled out his watch. "You are lucky. We will get over just in time to see them go back into the prison for their midday meal. But if you walk around by yourself," he warned me, "don't leave the streets and go into the jungle—the *libérés* may rob you. Almost every man in St. Laurent is a murderer or something as bad. He will murder you, too, and think nothing of it. Two fellows were guillotined last week. Too bad you were not here; I could have got you permission to see it."

THE launch swung towards a pier, and we came alongside with a bump. I grabbed a stanchion to prevent myself from falling. I was touching Devil's Island and felt scared.

"This is a friend of ours," said the Chinaman, introducing me to the customs officer on shore. All the men who had come over in the launch tipped their hats to the officer with a respectful: "*Bonjour*, monsieur," and raised their arms to show that they had nothing hidden on their persons.

The officer glanced at my passport and nodded permission for the Chinaman and me to go on.

We walked up the street. The wall of the prison was at our right; other prison buildings were to our left. The street was shaded by beautiful, old mahogany trees. It was very quiet. We came to a gate in the wall. *Camp de la Transportation* was written above it in black letters.

"*La Porte Noire*—the Black Gate," my companion said, and stopped. "The Gates Of Hell, the convicts call it."

I crossed to the other side of the street, opposite the gate, and stood beside one of the big trees. A small door beside the main gate opened and a number of guards in white uniforms and sun helmets came out. Each had a large automatic pistol in a black holster slung across his stomach. The guards waited in front of the gate, brawny and well-fed.

Then I saw to the right, along the river bank, a moving, closely packed column of men in red and white striped clothes—the approaching convicts. Guards were all around them, even on bicycles. The convicts shuffled along with bent heads. When they were quite near I stepped from beside the tree to see them better. They went past two by two, I could have touched them. All their faces were grey and all had expressions of the deepest despair.

Before the Black Gate the convicts stopped. The guards crowded around them.

Then the gate swung open and out came three tall convicts—Arabs by the looks of them, probably turnkeys or trusties—who, with a few deft movements of their hands, searched each convict as he entered the gate. The convicts were allowed to possess only their striped rags. During the search each convict raised his straw hat high above his head to show that nothing was hidden inside it. One by one the convicts went through the gate and into a big yard where, in the back, I could see their sleeping-sheds.

The gates slammed. A strange beauty and peace settled on the street. Not a sound could I hear from the hundreds of men inside the prison.

I continued up the street, which swarmed with vultures. They were an accepted part of life in St. Laurent. Then I had a cognac with my Chinese friend in the cabaret of St. Laurent, which was called *Un Petit Coin de Paris*—A Little Corner of Paris—and consisted of a small dance hall and bar.

As we were passing the Black Gate on our return to the launch five men walked towards us from the river. Two were guards in their white uniforms; three were convicts.

"*Evadés*," said the Chinaman. "They must have been caught along the river somewhere."

A Chinaman who arrived shortly afterwards brought the news that originally there had been four *évadés* in the group we had seen. One convict had snatched up a broken bottle lying in a ditch, and slashed his throat with the jagged glass.

"Is he dead?" I asked.

The Chinaman merely shrugged his shoulders and turned to speak to somebody else. In St. Laurent the fate of a convict was less important than the fate of a dog. . . .

The climate was tiring, and I went to bed early, but after all I had seen I could not sleep. I lay awake for several hours, then dressed and went down to the river. I decided that I might pick up some information by chatting with the Dutch Colonial Force soldiers in a little guardhouse at the shore end of Albina's pier.

Two of them were on watch. One was Franz, a veteran of the force, about thirty years old, blond, blue-eyed and heavy-boned, and the other a pleasant young native. Both spoke English and welcomed me as a chance of whiling away the time.

"I was in St. Laurent today," I remarked, "and saw three *évadés* brought back."

"That's nothing," said Franz. "Last month I caught eighteen right here in Albina."

"I suppose that most of them come this way," I said.

"Only those who have nothing but a raft or log for crossing the river. Those with canoes go right out to sea."

"So there's not much chance of getting through Albina then?"

Franz shook his head. "We catch them here, or in Moengo, or on the way to Paramaribo. I've seen them come across the river almost starved to death, with not the strength to walk a dozen steps. One *évadé* went on his knees begging me to shoot him dead or club him with my rifle rather than take him back. But who am I to kill a man? Let him kill himself."

I got up, went to the window and looked out into the night, saying: "You couldn't see a canoe even if it passed only twenty feet away."

"I don't give a damn how many go down the river as long as they don't come through Albina," said Franz.

The native soldier got up also, stretched himself, picked up his rifle and a torch and left.

"Where is he going?" I asked.

"He'll take a swing along the river and, if he feels like it, go to the Moengo road," said Franz.

"To look for *évadés*?"

"It's a good night for crossing the river."

"The prison wouldn't hold me if *I* were a convict," I said.

"Don't think escaping is a pleasure trip," said Franz. "Last year, two of us were on patrol near the mouth of the Maroni when we saw something drifting towards the shore. It was an *évadé* lying on a log. A school of sharks were trying to drag him off it. They had already bitten off his right hand. We went out into the surf and brought him in. He had been drifting on that log for four days and the sun had roasted the skin from his back."

Franz also told me of another danger as bad as sharks, that lurked in the waters—pirais, razor-teethed fish which swim in schools.

"On duty one night we suddenly heard terrified screams," he said. "We ran out on to the pier and flashed our torches. There, struggling to get to the shore, was an *évadé* who had tried to swim the river. Pirais were tearing the flesh off him. He was half a skeleton." Franz shook his head at the memory. "He had no chance. He collapsed and died."

"Nice country," I said.

"You don't know half of it," Franz assured me.

The native soldier returned. Franz looked at the clock and said: "Midnight already." He picked up his rifle

"The Gates of Hell" is what the prisoners called the entrance to the main camp at St. Laurent. Below: guards on duty in the detention house at one prison

and a torch and went outside to signal the hour with twelve blows on a piece of heavy steel rail. A dog barked in the distance.

The native soldier put down the magazine he was reading and listened. I heard Franz stride away from the pier.

"Franz is taking a walk," I remarked, looking at the native questioningly.

"Did you not hear the dog?"

"Yes, it barked three times."

"When it barks like that, *évadés* are around."

It was after one o'clock when I heard quick, firm steps approaching the guardhouse. It was Franz.

"How was the Moengo road?" I asked him.

He looked at me and then at the native. "Why do you ask?"

"He heard the dog bark and I told him," the native explained.

"The dog was right," Franz said quietly. "I hid between two shacks. After about fifteen minutes I saw two *évadés* coming through the darkness. When they were right in front of me I turned on my torch. You should have seen their faces. I took them to the barracks. They were from St. Jean, a camp about sixteen miles up the river. They had been hiding in the jungle for a couple of days and were starved."

"The man who catches them always takes them back, I suppose?" I said.

"That's it. He gets his guilder for each one and a few shots of rum. And that settles the case."

The two soldiers laughed.

I got up, said good night, and walked slowly back. The key to the trader's house was in an old tin can beneath the front steps. I was careful taking it out. The ground crawled with scorpions. . . .

When I had teamed up with Jules, and told him Bernard Carnot's story, he inquired throughout St. Laurent for news of Carnot, but without success. Nobody had heard of him for months.

We decided to use as a base for our search a small island in the Maroni, a few miles downstream from St. Laurent. It belonged to the Dutch, but was on the French side of the river. I had myself ferried there with my tin trunk and some mining tools, as if I were on a mining expedition. Jules joined me soon afterwards, arriving in his eighteen-foot canoe.

I shall never forget our first night at the island. We decided to sleep in the canoe, after tying it to some overhanging branches which completely hid us. Jules made a bed for me in the middle of the canoe, using blankets and our spare clothes. He planned to lie down in the bare stern, but I insisted on him lying beside me and sharing what little comfort there was. He was as profoundly moved by this gesture of friendship as he had been when I had shaken hands with him.

**Convicts working in a lumber yard at St. Laurent, which was the administrative centre for the prison camps. To be sent to Devil's Island was to be condemned to a "living death"—few prisoners ever escaped**

I was quickly asleep, but a few minutes later he woke me up. He was on his feet, his machete clutched in his hand.

"Monsieur!" he said, trembling tensely.

"What is it?" I asked.

"You have courage. . . ."

"What do you mean?"

"You have money in your pocket, a gun under your pillow and much gold in your teeth. All those things could make me rich if I had them—rich enough to leave French Guiana. With one stroke of my machete I could cut off your head, but you trust me—a convict whom you don't know—and go to sleep."

"Lie down, Jules," I told him. "You are a man the same as I am. We are partners."

He lay down, and from that moment we got along together as if we had known each other for a long time.

My trunk contained enough food to last us for several weeks. Our meals were simple—rice cooked on a little portable stove and mixed with tinned beef. We also had bread, cheese, some wine and tafia, a locally made rum which Jules bought on trips to St. Laurent. Tafia was favoured by convicts and *libérés* for warding off malaria. It was regarded as the next best thing to quinine, which was beyond their means.

We made ourselves quite comfortable, despite the incessant rain, by building a shelter of palm leaves. Jules, meanwhile, took immense trouble to change my appearance. In my New York clothes I was much too conspicuous. So I decided to dress and act like a *libéré*.

"At present you stand and look like a man who has nothing to fear," he said. "If a policeman sees you he'll have his hands on you at once. Move like a man who has stiff joints and has lost the will to live."

Jules put marks on my ankles to resemble old scars of leg-irons. A *libéré's* hat, red and white striped blouse, trousers and rough sandals made my costume. And the strength-sapping heat of Devil's Island had made me almost as hollow-cheeked and sunken-eyed as the poor wretches I was trying to imitate.

The threat of swift and horrible death was ever-present—as I realized only too well when our search for Carnot took us upstream from St. Laurent. I stayed in the canoe, among some overhanging bushes while Jules went ashore.

There was no breeze that morning. I had been awake for much of the night and felt sleepy in the sun. I dozed off.

Suddenly, I awoke.

Standing on the bank, staring at me, was a *libéré*.

"Isn't it hot?" he said, in a friendly but blurred voice.

Something made me turn round. Within a foot of the stern of the canoe, waist-deep in the water, was another *libéré*, sneaking up on me. He held a club raised in his hands and was about to shatter my head.

I whipped out my gun. Immediately the situation changed. The *libéré* behind me dropped his club and plunged for the shore, begging for mercy and grabbing branches and twigs to help him on his way. His fellow-*libéré* vanished.

Jules did not return for another hour.

When I told him what had happened, he remarked: "They wanted the canoe. If you hadn't had a gun, by now you would have been a corpse floating down the river."

We were in the neighbourhood of St. Jean, the big camp about sixteen miles above St. Laurent. In our search for Carnot we had covered a lot of ground that day and were tired and hungry. So we found an open spot and sat down. Jules still had some wine, bread and a tin of sardines.

We had drunk the wine and eaten part of the bread when we heard a noise in the bushes. At once we investigated. Slowly some branches parted and a face appeared.

I froze at the sight. Was it a human face? It was more like a mask covered with black mud and with white bones showing through it. I stared in horror, and the face stared at us.

"What do you want?" Jules asked.

"A bite to eat." The face was a convict's.

"We have hardly anything to give away."

"Just a bite—anything. For God's sake, give me something." The nude, emaciated upper body of the convict appeared. His right arm had a rag tied round it as a bandage and hung limply at his side.

"Stay where you are and I will see what I can do," Jules said, opening his bag. The convict stood motionless, making eager, slobbering noises, unable to control his excitement at the sight of food.

"I will give you some bread and a tin of sardines," said Jules.

"Open the tin. My arm is useless," said the convict.

Jules opened the tin, all the time keeping his eyes on him. The convict kept swallowing in anticipation. Then, with a gasp of delight, the convict snatched the tin, thrust his hand into it and crammed the sardines into his mouth.

When the man had gone Jules explained: "He is an escaped leper from St. Louis—the island in the Maroni set aside for lepers."

"But why should a man in such condition escape?"

"Goodness knows, monsieur. Lepers swim ashore sometimes. They want to see people who look human or they swim ashore to die."

We hurried away along a path through a swamp and, without realizing it, I raised my head and a spring came into my step.

Jules restrained me. "Drag yourself along, monsieur. Pretend that you have not eaten for a week—and do not expect to eat for another week."

Soon we reached the place where our canoe was hidden. After we had cleared the canoe from the bushes with which we had covered it before leaving it behind, I grasped the gunwale to push the canoe farther into the water before getting into it.

Suddenly Jules jerked me back. He stood with his machete raised and was staring into the shallow brown water. The long blade of the machete flashed down.

Jules held it under the water for a while, then lifted it slowly. The head and part of the body of a snake were impaled on it, still squirming.

"A water-serpent, monsieur," said Jules. "Very poisonous and hard to see."

I had been on the point of stepping on it.

We crossed over to the Dutch side of the river to wait there till the tide turned in our favour for the return downstream to our camp. We found a fairly open but safe spot and tied up.

Jules took a drink from our jug of tafia. I rarely drank tafia because I had found it murderous stuff, fiery and very potent.

"It's tafia that keeps the colony going," Jules declared. "Tafia and the hope of escape."

I lay stretched out in the canoe, my head on some rags, and looking up at the leaves above me. I had become a creature of the jungle, living in mud and water, tormented endlessly by mosquitoes.

My eyes went to Jules, sitting in the stern of the canoe. "Is it possible that Carnot is a leper?" I asked.

"Certainly."

"Surely, though, he would have written to his mother about it?"

"Perhaps not. Many convicts don't care to write of such things."

Soon the tide turned in our favour and we paddled back to our island to sleep. . . .

I awoke with a start. Jules stood at the foot of my hammock with his machete, holding something in his hand.

"What is it, Jules?"

"A vampire bat, monsieur. I woke up and saw that you had been restless. Your blanket had slipped to the ground and your mosquito net was no longer over you. Then I noticed two bats on your feet sucking your blood. I got this one."

Jules promptly went to sleep again but I stayed awake. . . .

The next day we were paddling silently downstream close to the shore when, going around a bend, we saw a half-naked convict fishing in a narrow creek.

Jules paddled nearer and said: "Any luck?"

"I have a few." Three or four tiny fish lay in his straw hat. The convict was over six feet tall and grotesquely emaciated. He had a thin crooked face and quick, blue eyes. I took him to be about thirty.

"Not enough to cook," I said, looking at his fish.

He grunted. "We'll cook them all right, be sure of that."

I reached under our tarpaulin and took out our jug of tafia. We always had tafia with us; when meeting *libérés* it helped to get information which might lead us to Carnot.

I offered the man, whose name was

Georges, a drink. "That feels good," he said. "It puts new life in me." He was so thin that he was almost a skeleton.

Two other half-naked convicts appeared.

"These are my friends," said Georges. "We're going to eat."

"Let's all have a meal together," I said to Jules. "Maybe we can help them out with food." I was lonely for company.

Jules did not seem to like the idea at all, but said nothing. All three convicts were tough. Jean, one of the two newcomers, was husky and tall, with a battered face, a broad jaw and tattoo marks on his chest and back. The other, who was referred to as the Rat, was short and thick-set, with black eyes and a crooked nose.

Jules landed the canoe and spread out on the ground what we had to eat—some bread and a little cheese.

"That's all we've got," he said. Our guests crowded round and sat down eagerly.

"You must have robbed a Chinaman," exclaimed the Rat.

When everything had been eaten we passed round the jug of tafia.

"That's a bad scar you've got there," I said to Jean, pointing to one which ran from under one of his armpits across his chest.

"I got that in Africa," he said proudly. "If anyone likes fighting let him join the *Chasseurs d'Afrique*."

"Don't you believe it," said the Rat. "Jean used to be a dishwasher in the army and when he got too old for that they kicked him out."

Georges jumped at him with surprising swiftness and grasped him by the throat, crying: "Do you want me to stick a knife in your belly?"

"You fellows are going crazy," Jules said quietly. "Take it easy."

"You take one drink and lose your heads," I added.

"What's that to do with you?" Jean demanded, rounding on me.

I did not answer and he repeated more menacingly: "What's that to do with you?"

"Nothing," I said.

"We are not hurting you," Jean went on and reached for the tafia. His hand shook and his battered face became fiercely bitter as he shouted: "Here's to the old regiment!"

"How long have you been here, Jean?" I asked.

"Ten years."

"And you, Georges?"

"Eight years. I wish I could get a boat—a real boat; not a lousy little canoe."

"Are you a sailor?" I asked.

Georges nodded.

"He used to rob sailors in Marseilles—and that makes him think he is a sailor," taunted the Rat.

The three of them were now quite drunk and I realized that Jules and I had to get away quickly.

The conversation then suddenly took a more dangerous turn. The Rat looked at me with his evil eyes, and said: "You are lucky to still have that gold in your head."

"You would like to have it, wouldn't you, Rat?" Jean asked.

"He would kill his brother for half of that," said Georges.

"But you, Rat, are not knocking out any teeth while I'm around," Jean snarled.

"Hark at him!" said the Rat. "Anyone would think he was sent to Guiana for reading the Bible."

"I was sent here for killing a man, and the whole world knows it. I did it right out in the open. He was a sergeant. If he had been like you I might have won another medal."

The Rat pointed to me: "The important thing is that Louis here has more gold in his mouth than either of us could earn in twenty years' chopping wood."

The three men, to whom murder meant little, faced me.

"Are you trying to tease us, Louis?" asked the Rat.

"Do you really want my gold?" I asked him. He seemed to be less drunk than the others.

"Sure, he wants it," Jean cried. "But I'd give something to see you kick *his* teeth out. Why don't you do it? Are you scared of him?"

"It's getting late, Louis," Jules reminded me.

Mercifully at this remark, the trio forgot about the gold. "Back to the camp! Convicts, line up! Quick march!" Jean roared.

"Yes; back to the camp, you killer of old women," said the Rat viciously.

"Shut up!" Georges cried. He picked up a piece of rotten wood and smashed it across the Rat's face. It cut the Rat's forehead open and blood poured over his face and chest.

"Don't move or I'll murder you," said Georges. "It's men like you that make the camp what it is, Rat. No wonder every day I feel like murdering a man."

"Let me strangle him," cried Jean, his feelings so roused by the sight of the blood that he threw himself at the Rat.

"What's the good of it, Jean? There are a thousand more like him," said Georges, trying to calm him down. "Come on, let's get out of here."

Jules and I said goodbye, picked up our belongings and got into our canoe. A few minutes later we were paddling downstream.

"I'll never do that again," I said to Jules.

I turned back to look again at the river bank and saw the Rat kneeling at the edge of the water, washing the blood from his face. He was alone. The others had gone. . . .

We spent the next few days around Camp Godebert and then near Mana, seeing *libérés* and staying in their jungle shacks, but nobody seemed to have heard of Carnot.

**Willis in his canoe on the Maroni River. The river is full of poisonous water snakes and fish that can rip a man to bits**

ONE afternoon we went into St. Laurent, where we sat down in the back-room of a Chinese storekeeper for whom Jules had done a lot of smuggling.

We drank steaming hot black coffee with cognac. The cognac put Jules in one of his rare moods for talking. He confided in me the reason why he had been sent to Devil's Island.

"I happened to be visiting a big French town when some men asked me to stand at a corner and watch for the police," he said. "They offered me money. Being a country boy, and unsuspecting, I accepted it. I did not realize that the men were about to make an armed robbery. I was convicted as an accomplice."

Then he told me of an escape he made during his term of forced labour. "News came through to St. Laurent of the gold-mining boom at Inini," he said. "At Inini I stood a chance of making quick money and even becoming rich. With it I could get out of the Guianas and start a new life somewhere else."

One day he did not return to the prison with his fellow convicts, but canoed to a mining company at Inini.

"I was given a shovel and told to dig. I breathed the air of freedom and stood on the free earth, which was full of gold," said Jules. "I was tireless, and worked all day and even at night."

Inini was gold-mad. There were white men, black men, Indians and Chinese, all digging furiously. Then the rains came. The miners were in mud up to their knees—but they kept on shovelling. Some of them caught fever and dropped dead. Their bodies floated in the pits they had dug.

"One fellow," Jules recalled, "stuck his shovel into the ground and came up with half a pound of nuggets. And all the ground around him was his. He ran about, showing the nuggets to everybody. That night he was murdered."

All along the Maroni, murderers lay in wait for successful miners making the return trip down towards Albina. Hundreds of men were killed.

Jules was becoming rich. After finishing his day's work for the mining company he went to his own claim and worked it for himself. Every night he turned in his gold to the company's office, and got a receipt for it. He was young and tough and stood this life for almost a year; then the fever started to get the better of him. One morning he could not lift his shovel. His body sagged.

Realizing that he was through, he went to the office and received a statement for his total output, payable in Paramaribo.

He teamed up with a Dutchman for the trip down-river. They left at night secretly in a canoe they had hidden in the jungle. On the river they were chased by robbers so often that finally they travelled only at night and hid during the day. By this time, they both had the fever and were often delirious. When they were almost caught by a gang of *évadés* they went ashore and each of them buried his loose gold, trying to memorize the spot.

Then disaster. Three days' journey above St. Laurent, they were captured by the French. The capture took place on the Dutch side of the river, but there was no law in the jungle. Jules and his companion were put in chains and taken to St. Laurent. There the Dutchman was set free, but Jules was sentenced to a year's solitary confinement on St. Joseph, an island off the coast of French Guiana.

"Would you escape now if you could?" I asked him.

"Where could I go at my age?" he replied. "I no longer have the receipt for my gold, and perhaps the Dutchman dug up all the loose gold we buried. I know no language but French, and no men except Frenchmen. This is my home, monsieur. . . ."

WE ordered more coffee and cognac. I watched the vultures, strutting about in the street. One went up to the open doorway of a shack and disappeared inside, but it soon came out again, pursued by a native woman swinging a rag at it.

I looked across the table at Jules, at his convict face and broken body, and knew that I felt towards him like a brother. Every moment we were together was a risk for him. He would get years in solitary confinement if we were caught.

Some *libérés* in the next room started to quarrel and suddenly there were shouts and curses. Then a cry rang out—a shout of agony. After the brief silence that followed we heard a body fall to the floor.

Jules was up in a flash. "Through the window, quick!" he said. "Someone's knifed."

The next day our search for Carnot continued. We collected our canoe, which, as usual, we had hidden among some bushes, and headed upriver.

We saw *libérés* living on the river bank or in the nearby bush. Most of them were catching the exotic jungle butterflies, for which there was a demand as decorations, or trading in native-made tafia. Some tapped rubber trees. They all lived in most miserable circumstances. The older ones managed to keep alive by catching a few fish, a snake or two and occasionally a peccary—an animal resembling a boar. A number of bolder ones were digging for gold farther in the interior, but that required strength, provisions and some tools, not to mention considerable courage to brave the constant danger of being murdered by other convicts.

We still had no news of Carnot, but Jules assured me that all *libérés* went back to St. Laurent sooner or later, and that we were certain to catch up with him.

We stopped for a while near St. Jean and talked to some of the men there. St. Jean was the camp for *relégués*—petty offenders, sentenced to Guiana for life after a fourth crime. There were over two thousand in the camp, living under conditions even more appalling than in St. Laurent. Knifings happened daily.

We found a spot on the river bank just above St. Jean and decided to stay there for a while. Jules made coffee.

A guard had just been killed in St. Jean by a convict who calmly walked up to him as if to ask a question, and stabbed him through the heart, and Jules told me stories of similar killings.

"The killers in the camps," he said, "are not like the starved *libérés* of St. Laurent. They are fresh from France. They have all their strength yet and many are fearless, like tigers. There is only one thing in their minds and that is to escape. They will kill anyone who gets in their way. Many of them die in the solitary cells or on the guillotine."

"Have you seen executions?" I asked.

"Many," he said. "The authorities make a show of them. The night before I saw my first executions, none of us in the blockhouse slept. In the courtyard outside we could hear the hammering of the executioner and his helper setting up the guillotine."

At dawn, turnkeys and guards took Jules and the other convicts into the yard. There stood the guillotine—a small, gaunt frame of iron and wood. The convicts were made to kneel round it in a close circle.

Then the door of the death-house opened and the first of the condemned men came out. He had been chained all night, but was now allowed to walk free.

A short distance from the guillotine

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Libérés—the lost legion of ex-convicts. Lucky ones made a meagre living by basket weaving, small-time smuggling or (below) catching butterflies for collectors. The others . . . they scavenged amid the squalor

the wretch sagged to his knees, paralysed with fear. The guards took hold of him, dragged him to the guillotine and laid him on the plank. The executioner secured his head first, then flung the straps over his body and buckled him down. He shrieked as the knife slid down the groove. From where Jules was kneeling he could see the head drop into the basket.

The second man came out with a firm step. He was as thin as a skeleton. He walked with a firm step right up to the plank and lay down on it.

"Some take pride in not showing fear," said Jules. "They know that their comrades will remember them only if they die bravely."

When the third man came out and had walked half-way across the courtyard to the guillotine, one of the convicts stood up, ran to the condemned man, flung his arms around him and kissed him. The condemned was his brother. Tears streamed down the convict's face as he begged the camp commandant for mercy. But the guards led him away.

The condemned man stood before the knife, turned round, raised his hand in salute to the assembled convicts and in a loud voice called out a farewell to his brother. . . .

The next day, as we returned downstream, the unusually desperate mood of the colony affected us because we had to be extra watchful to prevent ourselves from being attacked by the increased number of *évadés* prowling in the bushes and trying to get hold of canoes for escapes. As a further precaution, we changed the position of our camp, finally deciding on a place on an island about five miles downriver from St. Laurent.

One evening Jules told me about a convict who had worked many years in one of the colony's administration offices and who was supposed to know more about the *libérés* than anyone else in French Guiana. This man, though, had become a leper and was said to be on St. Louis.

"Perhaps I should try to see him," I said.

"It's not worth the risk, monsieur, to go to St. Louis," Jules answered. "And perhaps he knows nothing about Carnot."

"Could it be done, Jules?" I asked.

"St. Louis, which we have passed many times, is small and has few bushes in which to hide. If you were seen from the shore the guards would come out. And they would shoot you if you tried to get away."

"How could it be done, Jules," I persisted, "if I *had* to do it?"

"You would have to go to the island at night, sink the canoe and the following day, after dark, raise it and leave again."

Eventually Jules agreed to take me to St. Louis, though he declined to stay there himself.

Two days later, at midnight, we went upstream to the island, towing behind us a small dugout canoe. The night was hot and still.

The wooded mass of the leper island rose out of the darkness. There was no sound on the river as we glided into the bushes and came to a stop. About thirty or forty yards away, among trees and bushes, were the white walls of some leper huts.

We slashed off some branches to make a hiding-place. It was about 4 a.m. when Jules declared: "That's about all I can do. Remember that the guards will shoot—so be careful."

"By midnight tomorrow I'll be back at our camp," I said. "Don't worry about me."

"*Au revoir*, monsieur." He got into the small canoe and disappeared into the darkness.

I waded to my hiding-place and fell asleep, despite a heavy downpour.

When I awoke at seven o'clock the sun blazed in a blue sky. I had brought my gun, my camera—to provide an excuse for visiting the island—and a few packets of tobacco as presents for the lepers. These things were in a waterproof rubber bag.

Soon after 8 a.m. a leper in convict clothes, barefooted and hatless, came down the river bank. He was an old man with a grey beard and had a bandage around his head covering one eye. I watched him a while as he gazed on the river, and then I stepped out of my hiding-place and walked slowly towards him. When he saw me he was startled, but I smiled and bade him good morning.

"*Bonjour*," he answered. His voice and manner were those of a refined man.

"I arrived during the night and slept in the bushes," I said.

"You are no leper?"

"No."

"Then you have a lot of courage to come here," he said. "The guards shoot anyone who has no business on the island."

"At what time do the guards come round?" I asked.

"One will come over soon with our food. As a rule, they come three times a day, but sometimes they make surprise inspections. Why do you expose yourself to such danger?"

"I have come to photograph the lepers. The wife of one of the officials in St. Laurent wants the photographs for her collection."

"I hope she pays you well for the risk you are taking."

The man's face—especially his forehead—was badly marked by leprosy. I said: "I suppose most of the men on the island are very sick?"

"Most of them. I, too, am far gone, as you can see." He spoke in a calm voice. "We are all sick here—sick of the body and sick of the mind. We have no hope—yet we live."

We sat down in the shade and I asked about the man who had worked in the administration office. The leper told me that the man was on the island and that I would be introduced to him during the day. After we had talked for a while the leper said: "Come, we will walk along the beach, and if I see any lepers I will call them. They will not mind being photographed, especially for tobacco."

We had gone scarcely thirty yards when he swung round. "A guard!" he shrieked.

"I can't get back to my hiding-place," I said, wondering what to do.

"You can't run up to the huts—your *libéré* clothes would give you away—and my own hut is on the other side of the island, facing St. Louis."

"I will swim."

"No, no, the guard would see you," he cried. "But I have an idea. Quick—behind this bush!"

He took off his convict blouse and trousers and held them out to me.

"Put them on and walk slowly up the bank while the guard passes. Then come down," he said. "I will go into the river and appear to be taking a bath."

I looked at the clothes and then at the leper's diseased body. Should I risk contamination or swim for it? The pleading eye of the old man decided the matter. I took off my own clothes and put on his. He rolled up my clothes and took them into the river to keep them out of sight.

I began to do as I had been told. My shoulders, my whole body sagged in imitation of a convict stricken with leprosy. My clothes, still damp from the leper's body, felt as if they were melting into me and poisoning my system. As I made my way up through the high, sparse grass I heard the guard coming nearer. He had passed by almost before I was at the top of the bank. After idling there for a few moments I went down to the water again and saw him disappear. The leper emerged from the water, smiling. "Well done!" he said. "I would have sworn that you were a leper."

"It's your clothes that did it," I replied.

"They suit you perfectly. In fact, I never saw a better fit," he said. Then he added hurriedly: "Pardon me for joking. I know well enough that you feel as if you are on fire."

"I am rather hot," I admitted, trying to grin.

"Take the clothes off at once. If you have healthy blood you need not worry."

We walked to my hiding-place. I undressed and went into the river, sitting in the water and rubbing myself with sand. The old man sat near me and talked. I have never seen a man so eager to be friendly. In his isolation a new and sympathetic face meant almost seeing a new world.

I spent the rest of that day talking to lepers on the island, taking photographs and giving tobacco in return. All the lepers were as friendly and anxious to please as my first acquaintance.

The man I wanted to see was there. He told me that he remembered the name Bernard Carnot, and thought he lived between St. Laurent and St. Jean. I thanked the man excitedly. For the first time since arriving in the colony I felt that my search was progressing.

When it was dark I began to get my canoe ready for my return to Jules. I had finished moving away the branches when I remembered that I had hidden my machete in the mud on the river bed. I groped for the hilt with my bare toes, too lazy to bend down and use my hands.

Suddenly a great uneasiness and then a feeling of danger made me stop groping and stand still. I turned my head. There, on the shore, not more than ten feet away, stood a big convict, looking down at me.

I was deeply frightened. I could not remember having seen him during the day. My back had been to him as I groped for my machete. Obviously he planned to attack me. He had a club of some kind hidden behind his back.

"*Bonsoir*," I said, continuing to feel for the machete. My revolver was hanging in my waterproof bag, out of reach under some branches.

"*Bonsoir*," he answered with a sly smile. "Are you going away now?"

"Not yet," I said.

"Are you going to St. Laurent?" He shifted his weight to stand more at ease.

"Yes," I answered. If only I could find that machete! In my nervousness I had probably covered it with mud.

"Will you take me with you?" asked the convict.

"Certainly," I said, playing for time.

He watched me intently, still ready to strike. The water was almost up to my knees, and I realized that I would be unable to move quickly in it.

"I will give you some tobacco before we go," I said, hoping for an excuse to get away from where I was standing and reach my revolver.

"You have a lot of gold in your mouth," the man blurted out as if he could not keep this information to to himself any longer.

"Yes, I have a few gold fillings."

"You have a lot of gold."

"Who told you?"

"The others. They saw it."

I could see myself lying on the

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ground and this convict on his knees beside me, breaking out my teeth.

"What are you doing with your foot?" he asked. "You keep moving it around."

"I am feeling for my machete. I stuck it in the mud this morning and cannot find it again."

"Ah," he said, and his jaws opened. "You have no machete now?"

He came right to the edge of the water.

In his right hand I could see a club made of ironwood.

"I will look for it no longer," I said, pretending to pay no attention to him. "Let somebody else find it. I have a revolver, here under my shirt." I patted my stomach. "Come on now, let's go."

I started to go past him, wading through the water.

As I did so, he cried in alarm: "A snake! Look out!"

I was so startled by this ruse—there was no snake, of course—that I stopped. At the same moment his club struck me on the arm. Then he was on top of me.

In the water among the bushes we fought it out. At first we stood locked together, each of us trying to assess his opponent. The convict was middle-aged and strong. His wind was not good, and I soon had him panting, but he had a tremendous chest and plenty of energy.

He tried a few treacherous holds on me—but discovered that I could use holds too, having picked them up on the waterfronts of the world.

I tried to catch him off his guard. Then suddenly I realized that I could not move my left foot. It was caught. It had sunk through the mud and become firmly wedged under a tree root.

My situation was desperate.

The convict was at me like a madman, trying to grab my throat. When this failed, he went for my eyes, trying to gouge them out. Time after time he spread out his fingers and struggled to raise them to my face.

All I could do was to hang on to him, hoping he would tire or make a mistake.

At last he got me—right in my eyes. My head seemed as if it would burst. His fingers were right in my eye-sockets, sinking in.

With the extra strength given to me by fury and intense pain, I clutched his wrists and succeeded in pulling his hands away.

Were my eyeballs out? Completely blinded, I imagined that they were hanging out of their sockets and against my cheeks.

Grunting and snarling, he tried to shake off my hands, but I hung on. All the time I was trying to see. . . . My brain felt ripped open.

To my relief, I discovered that my eyes were still in place. Out of my left eye I managed to glimpse his huge face with its open mouth and broken teeth.

He jerked one arm free, and tried to stab at my eyes again. But he was nearly exhausted by this time, and a little slow.

My chance!

I struck him in the face. He bellowed in agony and staggered back, releasing me. I managed to pull my foot from under the root, threw myself at him and grasped him around the waist. He fell, and I landed on top of him in the water.

I could have knocked him out, but he would have drowned. I got up, leaving him.

I went to my waterproof bag, got out my revolver and climbed into the canoe. The convict sat in the water, moaning and sobbing, then scrambled to his feet and staggered into the bushes.

As I pushed at the overhanging bushes in order to propel myself out into the river, I had my back towards the shore. Something hurtled through the air above my head, struck some branches and fell into the canoe. It was a knife, thrown by the convict. I wondered what would have happened to me if I had lost my balance during our struggle, fallen and, with my foot still caught, given him the chance to use it. . . .

Soon I was in the river, half-blinded but paddling frantically for a spot on the shore of another island where I knew that it would be safe for me to stop and wash.

As soon as I had landed I stripped, went down to the water's edge and washed myself thoroughly. My face, neck and arms were covered with scratches.

I reached our camp, where Jules welcomed me. He went to St. Laurent the next morning and bought some permanganate of potash to disinfect my scratches. I also had a crick in my neck and my jaw felt half-dislocated. Luckily my back, which I had thought was my weak spot, did not trouble me at all.

It was early in the morning, about a week later, that I awoke covered with perspiration.

Jules stood beside my hammock, looking down at me.

"I can't move," I said. My body felt as if it had turned to lead.

Jules gave me a stiff dose of quinine and made some extra-strong coffee. I drank two cups, while they were hot, and fell asleep.

At noon I awoke again but was in a stupor.

Jules talked to me, but his voice seemed distant and I could not summon the will to answer him.

Two hours later, when I started to rave, Jules took action. He hid our camping gear under the bushes, and made a shelter of palm-leaves over the middle of our large canoe to keep out the sun.

He got me to lie down under this shelter, climbed into the stern of the canoe and then started to paddle upstream.

When we were abreast of the pier at St. Laurent a small boat with two guards in it and driven by an outboard motor came from the shore and swung alongside us.

"I am taking him to the hospital. He has the fever," said Jules.

One of the guards pushed the leaves aside and looked at me. Then without a word, the guards returned to the shore.

JULES took me past the hospital and kept on paddling vigorously. On and on we went, for the rest of that day and all of the night, upriver into narrow obscure waterways, past monkeys in the trees and crocodiles on the banks.

When I became so restless and delirious that I nearly upset the canoe, Jules tied me down.

The day after we had set out we reached our destination—a bush Negro village in the depths of the jungle.

"He is a very sick man," I heard the chief say as he stood beside the canoe and studied me.

"He is my friend. Please save his life," said Jules.

Two naked bush Negroes cut the ropes with which Jules had bound me and carried me into a hut.

I was put on a bed of leaves while a small party of bush Negroes went into the forest. They returned, having caught some beautiful blue and red Amazon parrots. One of these poor birds was immediately split in half, while alive, from the crown of its head to the tip of its tail. It was pressed against the soles of my feet, then covered with leaves and bound in position with rope.

Every three hours, day and night, another parrot was killed and the process repeated. At first, the pink flesh of the birds, when taken off my feet, had changed to a poisonous-looking black. But, as this strange treatment continued, it looked less and less ugly. Throughout this time, an old bush Negro woman squatted beside me and fed me on monkey broth. At night, smoke fires were lit to keep away the mosquitoes.

Eventually, the blood from a leech that had been placed on my arm was squeezed out over a bowl of water. If the blood had sunk to the bottom of the bowl in long, heavy strings, it would have been a sign that the fever was still in me, but it spread out on top of the water, thinly and evenly. The village chief, who watched the test, told Jules: "Your friend will not die. . . ."

Although I was still very weak when we left the village, Jules wanted to get me back to our camp as soon as possible. The camp was nearer to the sea and the air there was fresher. Also, Jules could get from St. Laurent the food I needed to restore my health.

Two days later I lay in my hammock in our camp. The shelter over me was new; the old one had become so infested with spiders, scorpions and centipedes that we had to pull it down. Some of the insects were of frightening size and dangerous. In my weakened condition I would have been, if bitten, an easy prey to paralysis or a fresh attack of fever.

Jules was able to buy fresh eggs and condensed milk in St. Laurent, and soon I felt well enough to resume our search for Carnot. Nevertheless, I broke out in a rash that made me think of leprosy—Jules assured me that it was not—and my toes had become infected with jiggers. These creatures lay their eggs under the toe-nails. After hatching, the new generation of jiggers gets into the bloodstream and can cause serious trouble. They were painful, and whenever I had time I sat down with a knife and dug them out from under my nails.

I really looked like an old-timer by now and trudged through the jungle so despairingly that I felt sure no one suspected me. Sometimes I imagined that I was in fact a *libéré*, condemned to stay in the colony for the rest of my life.

We had become perfect partners—Jules and I. There was never a moment's friction between us. For my part, I was always aware that he was carrying the load of our ventures and felt deeply grateful.

He often wondered about me. He said: "Monsieur, you are a little like a priest who has never been outside church and mingled with the people." He considered my "innocence," as he called it, appalling, and frequently shook his head at my inability to understand the mentality of the Guiana convicts and take sufficient care in my dealings with them.

One night we were in our hammocks and had been asleep for about half an hour when I was woken up by a sinister scraping noise.

It immediately reminded me of a terrible sound I had heard at sea years beforehand—the sandpaper-like skin of a shark rubbing against the side of a metal lifeboat.

"Jules!" I called out. "Listen! Something's by the tin trunk."

Jules got out of his hammock, machete in hand. "Stay where you are," he whispered, "and turn the torch on the trunk."

I did so. In the beam, at the back of the shelter, less than five feet from me, was a huge, slowly moving snake. It was as thick as my arm and about six feet long. Its big, puffy head turned towards me, startled by the light. Then instantly the snake began to coil in anger.

"Direct the light right at its eyes," Jules ordered.

While the reptile was thus blinded, he crept up to it. At the first blow of the machete, the snake went for him. Its head shot out like an arrow and its coils unwound. But he hacked ferociously and succeeded in cutting off the snake's head.

Casually remarking, "That was a bad one," he threw the body into the river.

A FEW days later, Jules returned from a shopping trip to St. Laurent with tremendous news.

He had found Carnot.

Jules had met a Chinese friend who knew an official in St. Laurent police station. This official gave the information that Carnot had recently returned from a trip upriver, which had lasted several months, and was now sharing a hut with another *libéré* on a strip of swampland about five miles above St. Laurent, between the Maroni and the road to St. Jean.

Eagerly, we set out for this place.

"We're almost there," said Jules, as we followed a narrow trail across the swamp.

My heart beat faster. What was Carnot like? What had prison life made of him? After all I had been through, I was suddenly afraid, with last-minute doubts, that he might not be worth rescuing. Then I chided myself, remembering that he was an innocent man and reflecting that no one could be much to look at, or a saint, after sixteen years on Devil's Island.

We came to a crude little hut made of palm-leaves, mud and flattened-out tin cans, red with rust.

"This is it, monsieur," said Jules.

He went to the doorway and called: "Carnot?" A voice within answered.

Jules turned to me and we went into the hut. It was dark inside, but thin shafts of light falling through the sides of the hut showed a rather small man, stripped to the waist, sitting on a bench made of branches. He was emaciated and had grey hair.

There was another bench opposite him, and Jules and I sat on it.

"It is hot today," I said, taking off my hat, as if I were paying an ordinary social call.

The *libéré* looked at me.

"This is a friend of mine," Jules

**These human etching blocks, tattooing spread all over their bodies, escaped from Devil's Island to Trinidad**

said. "He is from the Dutch side."

"You are not a *libéré*?" Carnot asked, surprised.

"I am a free man—as free as the governor of the colony," I said. "I have come to this side of the river to look around a bit."

Carnot stared at me, wondering who I was.

"I am from the United States of America," I went on. "From New York."

His face became tense when I said this.

"Your mother and sister live in New York, don't they?" I asked.

"Yes," he said in a low voice, his eyes on me like drills.

"I have come to bring you their greeting. They are fine people, both of them. Jeanne is grown up and beautiful."

"You know them?" he gasped.

"I know them very well, Bernard. Here—do you recognize this person?" I pulled from my pocket a little photograph that Jeanne had given me.

"It is my mother," Carnot cried. "My mother!"

His sobs became so heart-rending that Jules and I stood up and left the hut.

When he had calmed down, we went back in again and shared with him the food we had. Over this meal, we told Carnot of our plans for his escape. Originally I had intended to buy a really large canoe from some native turtle fishers on the coast, rig it and sail Carnot away in it. But it so happened that there was at that time, lying near the mouth of the Maroni, a sloop about to leave for Brazil.

"The captain has agreed to take you," I said. "In Brazil you will be a free man."

Our next step was to take Carnot's photograph for the fake passport we planned to buy him. We had brought with us my camera, a shirt and tie, scissors to cut his hair and a razor for shaving.

While I got Carnot ready for the photograph, and took it—what a job it was to make him wear a relaxed expression—Jules acted as a look-out, standing some distance away on the path leading to the hut in case Carnot's fellow-*libéré* returned.

Then we were ready to go. It was quite a walk to the place on the river where we had left our canoe, and the sun was already low.

Jules led the way. I followed with Carnot.

He was barefooted, and as he walked the hot black mud oozed up between his toes. He wore an undershirt and a pair of blue dungarees which were cut short at the knees and consisted mostly of patches. A shabby felt hat was on his head. After sixteen years on Devil's Island, a few rags supplied by the Salvation Army, were all he possessed.

As soon as we were in the canoe we paddled across to the Dutch side of the river to avoid any chance meeting with a French patrol. The tide had just started to go out again. Jules and I paddled.

WHEN we passed Albina, a soldier peered at us through the open window of the little guardhouse on the pier. Not a sound was in the air as we glided along. Then the bell of the little Catholic church began to ring. Carnot sat motionless, gazing at the French shore.

We were about a mile below Albina, and abeam of St. Laurent, when Jules stopped paddling and we had a drink of tafia.

After that, we kept more to the middle of the stream, and soon only a few lights behind us showed where St. Laurent lay in the gathering dusk.

"Am I coming back this way before going on the sloop?" Carnot asked.

"No," said Jules quietly.

"Then I will not see St. Laurent again?"

"Never again, Carnot."

"God! How can I believe it?"

Night had fallen by the time we reached our camp. Carnot and I stayed there for a couple of days while Jules went to St. Laurent to get my film developed and have Carnot's picture affixed to a passport.

Carnot was happiest when I talked to him about his mother and sister. He rarely referred to himself or to his experiences in the colony.

When Jules returned, the three of us set out after dark, under low-sweeping rain clouds, to find the sloop. We reached her a little before midnight. She lay hidden beside the shore of one of the Dutch islands in the river, the top of her mast and her sides camouflaged with bushes. She was an old ship of about twenty tons, trading between Brazil and Cayenne and other settlements in French Guiana. Her ropes and sails were in tatters and her sides had never seen paint. I would not have given £50 for her. She had a little two-cylinder engine to help her get in and out of her hiding-places, for her real business was smuggling. She smuggled anything of value—from gold nuggets to axes and shovels, convict clothes, shoes and blankets.

She also smuggled convicts when there was a chance, but few convicts trusted themselves to ships after it had been discovered that the captain of one boat had murdered almost two hundred convicts who had paid him to take them to Brazil.

The captain of the sloop and his three sailors greeted us warmly, and after we had sat down in the cabin one of them produced a bottle of rum. Jules had known the captain, a Portuguese, for years.

We talked till the tide turned, then Jules and I took leave of Carnot. We climbed into our canoe and paddled out into the river.

A few minutes later the sloop backed out of her hiding place, her little engine chugging softly. As soon as she was clear, she swung around and headed towards the sea.

Then she was gone into the night—gone with the son of Madame Carnot.

The price of his passage to Brazil was £5.

NOW Jules and I were alone again, paddling on the Maroni as we had done so often before. But now it was different; our job was done.

We were approaching our camp, paddling hard against the current, when we heard an outboard motor and saw a searchlight sweeping the shore and the river.

"A patrol," Jules said, and stopped paddling.

"It's coming this way."

"It looks like it, monsieur." His hand went to his shirt where he carried my revolver.

"We will be questioned—maybe searched."

"Yes. . . ."

I was desperately anxious to avoid trouble at this late stage. What could I do?

"We have been spotted, Jules," I said, ducking down to the level of the gunwale so that I couldn't be seen. "I'm going overboard. You can pick me up after the patrol has gone."

"But the pirais, monsieur. They will tear you to pieces."

I was already over the side and in the water, hanging on to the gunwale. "I can shout if they get me," I said.

"It'll be too late then," Jules pleaded.

"I've got to take the chance. Whatever you do, for your own sake, don't shoot. I can swim across the river if I have to."

I took a deep breath and went beneath the surface. I swam underwater for as far as I could.

When I came up I could see the patrol boat alongside our canoe and the light on Jules.

I drifted downstream a little and started to swim back, breasting the current and trying not to make any ripples.

Suddenly there was the sound of the outboard motor opening up and the boat sped away, swinging around the canoe.

A few minutes later I heard Jules's voice, saw the canoe and climbed back in.

Jules told me that the guards were armed with repeating rifles and were looking for four convicts making an escape. They had searched the canoe and examined his *libéré* passbook.

As Jules started to swing the bow of the canoe back towards the French shore, I was overwhelmed by the feeling that I had seen enough of French Guiana, that my luck might run out and that something might go seriously wrong and I would be caught.

"Let's head for the Dutch side, Jules," I said. "I've had enough of the colony."

"We have no place to sleep there, and you are soaking wet," he protested.

"It won't be long until morning," I said firmly. "I don't want to go back."

We paddled to the Dutch shore and tied up in some bushes. We spent the rest of that night in the canoe and the next morning, after my clothes had dried in the sun, I walked into Albina.

Two days later, having bought new clothes and made myself as presentable as I could, the time came for me to leave for New York.

Jules and I stood on the little beach of Albina among the bush Negro canoes.

It was a day of blazing sunshine. At the little pier the Prinzess Juliana was loading for the trip back to Paramaribo.

Jules and I faced each other.

"Monsieur," he said haltingly. "I would have died for you on the river the other night, when the guards nearly caught you. I want you to believe that before you go."

"Of course I believe it," I said. "I have never had a better partner. If you ever need me, let me know and I will come back."

I embraced him and put my cheek against his. And so we parted.

The Prinzess Juliana, a swift, white-painted ship, steamed down the Maroni. A fresh breeze came in from the sea, but though I had hungered for it for almost three months, it did not refresh me.

In my thoughts was the sight of Jules sitting in his canoe in the middle of the river as we had swung away from the pier. He had waved to me, old and forlorn and without hope.

Shortly before we said goodbye, I implored him to come with me in the Prinzess Juliana, but he refused, repeating that French Guiana was now his home.

"*C'est la vie*," he said.

In my cabin lay his last gift to me—a box of blue jungle butterflies.

I boarded a steamer in Paramaribo and after a quiet trip north we docked in New York.

Madame Carnot and Jeanne heard from my own lips that Bernard had escaped and was no longer in French Guiana. Later came the news that he was in Recife, a coastal town on the eastern tip of Brazil, working as a gardener.

During the war, a large number of the Guiana convicts escaped and joined General de Gaulle.

Bernard Carnot enlisted from Brazil and was killed near Strasbourg shortly before VE-day. In the meantime, Madame Carnot and Jeanne had sold their home in New York and moved to Canada.

Amid the destruction of so much of the world, Devil's Island also received its death-blow. The day came when the convicts were taken home to France. Their cells and dungeons were given back to the jungle.

As for Jules, one day in 1943 I received a censored letter, postmarked in Albina. On a scrap of paper was scrawled: "Jules has died of fever." There was no other information.

***THE END***

**Most of the French Guiana prisoners slept in dormitories like these . . . unless they were being kept in one of the solitary confinement prisons**

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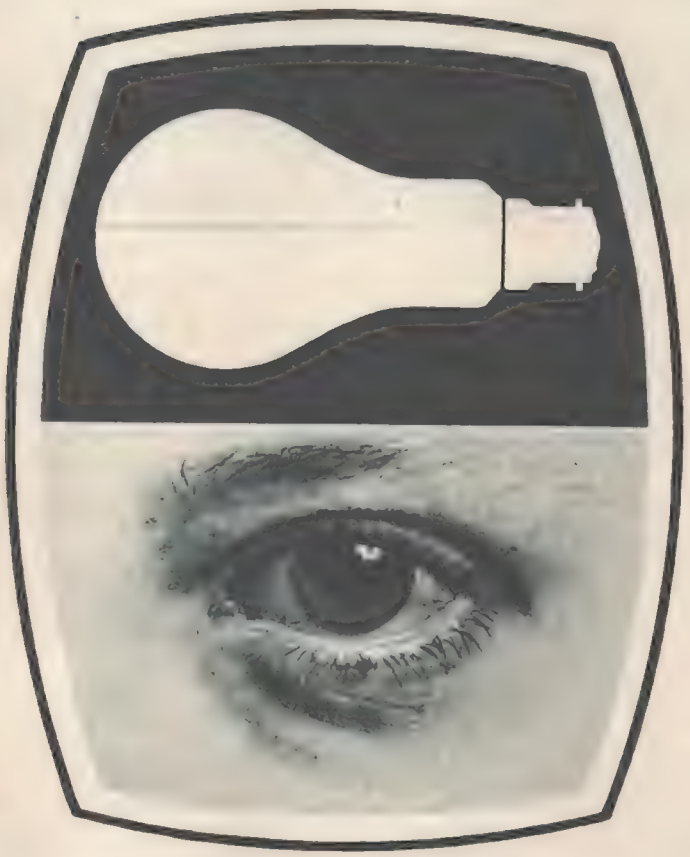
# say Crompton



# —you'll *see* why!

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## Puffing nomad of our roads

*Continued from page 27*

has no purchase, and if it stops halfway up a hill it often fails to start again. Once, driving a twelve-ton roller between Dorchester and Salisbury, House was towing his van behind him with his wife and two of his four children inside when he suddenly felt the brakes giving way on a hill with a gradient of one in seven. Banging his spanner on the boiler to attract his wife's attention, he shouted to her to hold the children tight.

After half a mile of wild careering the roller ran into a high bank, the caravan ran into the roller and the water cart into the van. House was thrown spreadeagled over the boiler and his family was thrown into the road, dazed but unhurt. His wife comforted him by saying: "We won't be long getting to Salisbury this way, will we?"

Experience has taught House that a runaway roller is almost impossible to control. Many rollers have no differential and steering is by means of a chain loosely hooked to the front roller. A tight chain would merely make the roller dig in on one side and so it may take eight to ten revolutions of the steering wheel to work a forty-five degree turn.

Says House: "If you are running amok downhill you might try to follow the road round a couple of bends, but you are soon exhausted twisting this wheel around so many times. So you do your best and hang on grimly."

Roller drivers have a saying that "You can always wait for steam but never for water." Most steamrollers need a drink every three or four miles. "At one time," says House, "we used to know every pond, stream and spring in England and Wales and it was relatively easy to plan a journey so that you would strike water at regular intervals, but now so much of the supply has been piped for various needs that it is sometimes impossible to find water."

He and his firm's experts are convinced that the shortage of accessible water in Britain is one of the main reasons for the decline of the steamroller and the success of its diesel counterpart.

At times House has taken water from pipes dating back to Roman times, from ponds, lakes, reservoirs and garden taps. Once after he had picked up water from a clear stream in Devon, the injector which pumps water from the cart into the boiler developed a fault. House took it apart and found that a school of one-inch long fish had blocked the pipe for several feet.

Driving through large towns creates other water problems. Permission has to be obtained before water can be taken from a hydrant.

Smoke-making is also frowned upon in cities and House has been warned several times. He usually avoids this hazard by stoking up the fire before entering a city and hoping that the steam will take him through without more coal. But it is not easy when at the same time he has to watch his water gauge, his steam valve, his speed, his fire, his oil, small boys running about and bollards in the centre of the road.

One obstruction in a small town near House's depot has been knocked down so often—at a cost to his firm of £17 a time—that he now has a special way of negotiating the turn: he clambers down from his cab and takes the locking pin out of the right-hand side roller so that it free-wheels around the corner.

Coal shortages are sometimes a bugbear and once, when he ran out of fuel, House managed to limp into the nearest small town and came to a dead stop in front of a coal merchant's yard. The merchant did not like steamrollers and refused to let him have fuel. House sat down by the gate and told him: "That's too bad for you because I am stuck. I can't move an inch and your customers can't get in."

He recalls: "I had my five hundredweight of best Welsh in a matter of minutes."

But he remembers another time when he wished that he had not carried quite so much coal. He was towing a boiling tar pot around a West Country army camp one day when the roller made too sharp a turn and upset the tar pot. It caught fire, ignited the waste oil running out of his engine and then the coal dust in the tender. "I was down from the cab in no time at all," he says. "Within a few minutes the roller was a mass of flames."

Bad weather often upsets his schedule. He once stopped at the bottom of a long hill in Wales and, as it had been snowing, he studied the state of the road. It looked passable, but halfway up on a sharp bend traffic had packed the snow into a hard cake of ice.

"The fifteen-ton roller lurched and, inch by inch, began sliding off towards a ravine," says House. "It's an odd feeling to have all that weight shifting under your feet. Fortunately a couple of large trees at the edge of the road stopped me—but they ripped the cab off the engine."

Now, when snow falls, House stops at the nearest pull-in and digs in for a while. During the winter of 1945 he was forced to stop on Windmill Hill, near Tidworth, one of the highest points between London and Bristol. He lit his anthracite stove in the van, cooked his meal and went to sleep. The next morning he could not move the kettle off the cold stove. It was frozen solid. The door was blocked and only one of the van's four windows would open. He stood on tiptoes for half an hour moving a long-handled brush to and fro outside the window until soldiers from a nearby camp came to free him. His van had been almost completely buried in a seventeen-foot snowdrift.

One day two winters ago he stopped for a few days in a lonely spot on Salisbury Plain to let the weather clear up. He was stuck for five weeks. He says: "I just fiddled about, cleaned my van, and was very grateful to the people who brought me eggs, bread and tea. But my most welcome visitor was the postman who brought me my wages in an envelope addressed to 'Eddison Roller No. 251, Salisbury District.'"

He has often been short of money and more often of food. Once he trudged seven miles through heavy snow for a loaf of bread. But, like most roller drivers, House enjoys even long waits and has organized his life to cope with them. "I think it is impossible to

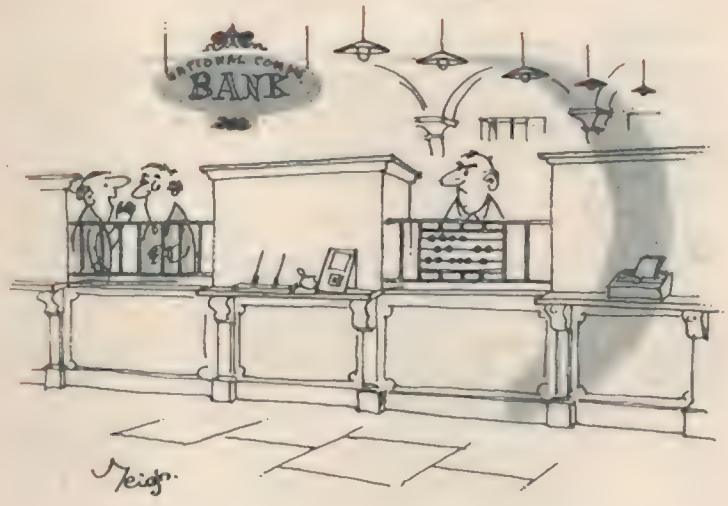
## October

by JAMES ANGELL

Red month; yellow month; month
of leafy loveliness,
Marching down the valley with
flags held high.
Brown month; golden month;
month of patterned perfectness,
Flings her coloured gauntlet at
the threat-grey sky.

Kind month; friendly month;
month of mellow mystery,
Cossetting her secrets in a warm,
brown breast.
Crisp month; rustling month;
smiles at hidden history,
As she cuddles up the hedgehog
for his winter rest.

Sweet month; scented month;
month of perfumed piquancy,
Flirting with the couch-fire and
the blithe, blue smoke.
Gay month; laughing month;
jests with eager ecstasy,
At the chequered splash of magpies in a bare-boughed oak.




"He's just beginning here!"

starve," he says. "There are still rabbits about. And pheasants will never learn: they love to walk across the road at dusk so that you can catch them by hand. Then sometimes a chicken walks up and surrenders." Once he was carefully laying rabbit snares in a wood and marking them off with hazel twigs when a gamekeeper intervened. "We parted good friends," recalls House, "but I had a tin of beans for my supper that night."

Most steamroller drivers love their itinerant life. Many have their wives with them and often their children, and several of the firm's employees were born in the sharp-cornered, ungraceful vans. Most drivers keep their vans spotlessly clean, decorate them with pictures and calendars and fix up a radio set.

One man and his wife papered theirs with pink and blue flowered wallpaper. Several keep cats and other pets. Scores of the firm's employees have worked their engines for forty years or more and retirement from "Lizzie," "Edith" and "King of the Road" is not easy. One driver's wife who had lived in a van for thirty-five years could not sleep in her new Devon bungalow. She ended by laying wooden boards across the springs of her bed.

Most drivers are keen visitors to the various steamroller rallies and races which take place up and down Britain every summer, but House has stopped going ever since he lost a friendly event a few yards from the starting line when a beautiful head of steam let him down.

Yet, like his colleagues, he has great faith in the performance of the huge road monsters and willingly quotes the classic example of the steamroller which won a race against a Spitfire. One driver working on an R.A.F. aerodrome at the end of the war became tired of hearing pilots joking that his roller had only two speeds—too slow and stop.

He challenged them, saying that horsepower per pound of metal his steamroller was faster than their planes. The station commander worked out the odds and declared that the Spitfire had to take off, fly east for seven and a half minutes, then fly back the same distance, land and beat the roller to the edge of the tarmac. In front of hundreds of spectators, the fourteen-ton roller, sweating oil and fumes at every joint, beat the Spitfire by several yards.

"Mostly," says House, "it is a humdrum job which takes every skill you've got, especially when people think it funny to lead you astray." Once, near Gloucester, he asked a bystander for directions. The man told him to go up a hill and turn sharp right.

House did so and ran into a blind alley. "There I was with a twelve-ton roller, a van behind it and a water cart behind that, stuck. I hadn't got a hope of turning round. I had to borrow a tractor, unhitch everything, back out, hitch up and start again."

A humorous, resourceful man, House now has a permanent home in Dorchester, where he lives with his wife and two of his children between jobs. But he is mostly on the road. He has never regretted the day in 1942 when, a sergeant-major with eighteen years' service in the Dorsetshire Regiment, he was invalided out because of a wound and applied for a job driving steamrollers.

He says that he is still learning. His last lesson came a few months ago when he was working at an airfield in the south of England. Underground fuel tanks were being built in twenty-five-foot deep holes, and before concrete was poured in, House had to go down and consolidate the earth floor. Workmen built a ramp for him and he chugged his way down.

He had hardly begun working when the steam failed. Stoking up, he started again. Within five minutes there was no more steam. For several hours he struggled with his machine.

"It was the weirdest thing I had ever come across," he recalls, "until I discovered the reason for my loss of power. I was so deep in the ground that there was no draught for my fire. I felt like asking the air force boys to put one of their jets up top and blow some down to me." – THE END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"What's the trouble, dear?"

## Secret fear

*continued from page 17*

sank down where they were, their bodies aching with weariness, their mouths and throats tight and hurting with dryness.

"I need a drink," Martha said. "I feel squeezed dry, like a very old sponge left in the sun."

"Hold out a while longer," Greg said softly. "We're on rations, remember."

He reached out for her, and she turned, and they lay there clasped together. . . .

The moon woke Greg—a big, full moon blandly telling him it was time to get along. He carefully withdrew his arm from beneath Martha's head. She didn't wake and he looked down at her, at the unhurried rise and fall of her breathing. He was amazed at her tranquillity. It was as though she had come to believe implicitly that he would get them through. He felt ashamed, unworthy, because he was going to let her down.

In that mood of self-accusation he looked up and saw the Myalls' campfires in the scrub, three of them, close together, and anger dispersed the remainder of his tiredness. Now she would know the thing he had sought to hide from her.

He knew that the Myalls rarely if ever moved after dark. They thought there were spirits abroad, and the night air was too chill for their near-nakedness. The first thing they did at sundown was to light a fire and cuddle it until the sun came up to warm them again. He'd known that, but he had forgotten.

He touched Martha's shoulder and saw her come awake. "Time we moved," he said, and nursed the absurd hope that she wouldn't see the fires. But her head turned and he said, quickly: "It's all right. Just a tribe of Myalls."

She swung round, her face bright with hope. "Greg——" She gripped his arm. "They'll have water. . . ."

"Sure enough," he said, "they've got it, and they know where to get more. But we'll see none. They want to see us die. Maybe they'll even help us die, if they get a chance. They've been tracking us all day."

She stared. "You didn't tell me."

He made a vague gesture. He said: "It's time we started walking."

But she didn't move.

"Before we run away," she said evenly. "Let's go over there and ask those Myalls for help."

"How?" His voice rasped in sudden irritation at her refusal to face the facts. "They wouldn't let us get near them. They're scared of the gun."

"Then put it down."

"And get speared?"

She looked at him carefully, and shook her head. "You're not making sense, Greg. They can't mean us any harm. They've had plenty of chances to spear us already, if they've been following us all day."

"Nothing makes sense with the Myalls," Greg said harshly.

"Maybe they want to offer help."

"Listen," he said thinly. "Leave the Myalls to me. We're keeping away from them—and the next one I see is going to get plugged, just to show 'em we're still on top."

They picked up the water-can, the rifle, the haversack and their hats and started south again, walking slowly and in silence. In the moonlight the spinifex plain was more remote and lonely than it had been under the sun. They walked in unreality, and it seemed only minutes to Tennison before the Myalls' fires had dwindled to small, pale pinpricks behind them.

Then Martha said: "You're forgetting the only thing that matters, Greg. The Myalls are people."

"You don't understand," he said curtly.

She put a hand on his shoulder. "I'm beginning to," she said softly. "Understanding always takes a little time."

They lengthened their strides then and went on. They did not talk again, because talk needed and used moisture. They did not stop because Greg was afraid to break the rhythm of their movement. It was hypnotic, and within its vacuum he felt as though he could keep his legs moving and carry the rifle and the food pack for ever.

He tried to think about Martha, about their life together at Catfish Springs. But his mind rolled on and on; he could grasp nothing clearly. He was lost in a sort of waking dream when he realized that Martha was calling him. He went back to her.

She was sitting on the ground, propped on her arms. "It's close to midnight," she gasped. "I have to rest."

Greg sloughed off the haversack and dropped down beside her. "Mustn't stop too long—we'll get stiff." He produced some biscuits and a can of meat. "It's time we ate."

"I couldn't," Martha whispered.

"Take a swig of water and then try," he said. "Hold the water in your mouth as long as you can."

They both took a mouthful and held it, letting it trickle down their throats, and then the food was not so difficult to swallow. They rested fifteen minutes by Greg's watch and then he struggled to his feet. Martha didn't move. He reached a hand down to her and had to exert all his strength to get her up. He realized then, with dull

FAME—I

None despise fame more heartily than those who have no possible claim to it.

J. Petit-Senn

surprise, how tired she had become, and how tired he was too.

"Give me the water-can," he said.

"Leave it." Her voice was weak but fierce. "I'm not a passenger."

So they set off again, but more slowly; and, as the moon slid down the sky, their halts became more frequent and their bodies more unwilling to obey their minds.

At dawn they were moving more by habit than by willpower. They stumbled over spinifex bushes, went down on hands and knees, and came up walking like automatons. The sun was burning hot when they turned for the shelter of the scrub and dropped exhausted in the shade.

"We'll sleep in turns," Greg said, his voice a croak. "You first, Martha."

"Because of the Myalls?"

He nodded. "They'll be up with us again soon."

Martha shrugged. It was a slight movement of her shoulders, and a twist of bitterness appeared on her cracked and swollen lips. "What can they do to hurt us?"

Before Greg could reply, she had fallen asleep. He lay back with the haversack still strapped to his shoulders and the rifle balanced across his thighs. For a few minutes his eyes, bloodshot and gritting with weariness, searched the trees in search of Myalls. Then they closed and, no matter how hard he tried, he couldn't prise them open. After a while, he no longer tried. . . .

He clawed back to consciousness desperately, like a man climbing on shifting screen on a mountainside, hauling himself towards the crest that was Martha's voice saying: "Greg, wake up: Wake up."

Then he was sitting upright, blinking his eyes against the glare of the sun. His right hand felt for the rifle on his thighs, and fear ripped through him. It wasn't there.

"I've got it," Martha said.

Relief flooded in. He gave her a tight grin, hardly moving his lips. They were so cracked that even that much of a smile was painful. He reached out for the rifle, lying at her side.

"I'll take it now," he said. "You try to sleep. This time I'll really stay awake."

"Forget the gun, Greg," she said quietly. "It's just so much old iron."

He stared, struggling to understand. She seemed calm and determined.

"Give me the rifle," he said tightly. "Those swine must be all round us now."

Martha nodded. "I've been watching them. They came out in the open while you slept." As he made a move towards her, she put one hand up quickly and slapped the other down on the rifle.

"Don't," she warned him. "Stay there and listen to me." She waited until he obeyed her and then went on: "We're not going to make it your way, Greg—by going it alone. We'll have to try my way now. We have to put this gun down and walk away from it. Then maybe the Myalls will accept us and come out of the bush to help."

"Help us into another world," Greg growled.

"You're afraid of them," she said. "You can't think straight."

"Afraid?" He jerked the word out. "Afraid of a few skulking Myalls?"

"I told you before I was beginning to understand. You're afraid, and you carry the rifle to beat your fear." She paused. "I've had no rifle to help me against the bush. We both have our fears, Greg, and neither of us have been able to think straight because of them. But I'm not scared of people. . . ."

She stood up, then slowly and painfully picked up the rifle and drove it muzzle first into the middle of a small bush. Then she turned. "Are you coming?" she said.

Greg looked up at her for a long moment. Then he struggled to his feet, the pit of his stomach cold at the thought of what he was going to do, at what Martha was leading him into doing.

He knew then that what she had said was true. He was afraid of the Myalls, afraid of them just as she was afraid of the bush. But his fear had never shown—because he had always had the rifle to shore him up.

They walked together past the rifle into the sparse tree-growth of the bush, walking closely together for support. Greg's eyes kept a pecking vigil on the bush ahead, but it was no more than habit. His right hand felt strangely light without the rifle.

They had gone perhaps three hundred yards when it happened. A tall native stepped from behind a tree some fifty yards ahead.

He was a tall, coal-black man with a big beard and a small grass loin-cloth. In his right hand he held a spear and a throwing woomera, in his left a wooden shield. Greg felt a momentary spurt of panic and instinctively lifted his own right hand as though the familiar rifle were still there.

"Keep walking," Martha said quietly.

Other Myalls came out of the bush, naked but for their beards and tiny loin-cloths, but fierce-looking and dignified. They stood in attitudes of watchfulness, their black eyes glittering, balancing their wicked shovel-nosed spears.

Greg felt his breath constricting, for he knew that the merest flick of those throwing arms would mean death. . . .

Then the tall Myall, a head taller than the others, lifted his spear, twirled it over his head and jabbed it deep into the ground at his feet. The others were a split-second behind him. Greg felt his tension run out like turning on a tap. His knees went weak.

Then Martha's face crumpled and tears ran over. Greg put his arms around her and kissed her. When they looked up, the Myalls were standing close around them, their white teeth gleaming in the tangle of their beards and their black eyes laughing.

Martha said: "It's probably the first time they've seen a white man do anything that made real sense." THE END


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SC64

# 4.50 from Paddington

*Continued from page 13*

used to do. But it wasn't that I didn't hear you.. I'm afraid I wasn't paying attention."

"I just asked about the trains to London tomorrow. Would the afternoon be all right? I'm going to Margaret's and she isn't expecting me until after tea."

"I wonder, Elspeth, if you would mind going up by the 12.15? We could have an early lunch."

Mrs. McGillicuddy looked at her friend curiously. "What's on your mind, Jane?"

"I suggest, Elspeth, that I should travel up to London with you, and that we should travel down again as far as Brackhampton in the train you travelled by the other day. You would then return to London from Brackhampton and I would come on here as you did. *I*, of course, would pay the fares." Miss Marple stressed this point firmly..

Mrs. McGillicuddy ignored the financial aspect. "What on earth do you expect?" she asked. "Another murder?"

"Certainly not," said Miss Marple, shocked.. "But I confess I should like to see for myself, under your guidance, the—the *terrain* of the crime. . . ."

Accordingly, on the following day, Miss Marple and Mrs. McGillicuddy found themselves in two opposite corners of a first-class carriage speeding out of London by the 4.50 from Paddington.

On this occasion no train drew level with them, or they with another train. At intervals trains flashed past them towards London. On two occasions trains passed them the other way, going at high speed.

At intervals Mrs. McGillicuddy consulted her watch doubtfully. "It's hard to tell just when—we'd passed through a station I know. . . ." But they were continually passing through stations.

The train started to lose speed, and then began crossing points.

"We'll be in Brackhampton in a minute," said Mrs. McGillicuddy, "and I can't really see this journey has been any good *at all*."

THE train drew slowly into the busy length of Brackhampton Station. Easy, thought Miss Marple, for a murderer to merge into that crowd, to leave the station in the midst of that pressing mass of people, or even to select another carriage and go on in the train. But not so easy to make a body vanish into thin air. That body must be *somewhere*.

Mrs. McGillicuddy had descended. She spoke now from the platform, through the open window. "Now take care of yourself, Jane. Don't catch a chill. It's a treacherous time of year, and you're not so young as you were."

Miss Marple nodded and said: "Don't stand in the cold, Elspeth, or you'll be the one to catch a chill. Go and get yourself a good hot cup of tea in the refreshment room. You've got time; twelve minutes before your train back to town."

"I think perhaps I will. Goodbye, Jane."

Mrs. McGillicuddy turned away; a whistle blew, the train began to move. Miss Marple watched the sturdy, thickset body of her friend recede.

She did not lean back as the train gathered speed. Instead she sat upright and devoted herself seriously to thought. Dispassionately, like a general planning a campaign, she weighed up and set down in her mind the facts for and against further enterprise. On the credit side were the following:

1. *My long experience of life and human nature.*
2. *Sir Henry Clithering and his nephew (now at Scotland Yard, I believe) who was so very nice in the Little Paddocks case.*
3. *My nephew Raymond's second boy, David, who is, I am almost sure, in British Railways.*
4. *My faithful Florence.*

Miss Marple reviewed these assets and approved them. They were all very

**"You're *sure* you wouldn't like a demonstration, madam?"**

necessary, to reinforce the weaknesses on the debit side—in particular her own bodily weakness.

Then she set methodically about her plan of campaign. She wrote to her great-nephew, David West, combining Christmas wishes with an urgent request for information. In due course his reply came:

Dear Aunt Jane,

Now what are you up to? I've got the information you wanted. There are only two trains that can possibly apply—the 4.33 and the 5 o'clock. The former is a slow train and stops at Haling Broadway, Barwell Heath, Brackhampton and then stations to Market Basing. The 5 o'clock is the Welsh express for Cardiff, Newport and Swansea. The former might be overtaken somewhere by the 4.50, although it is due in Brackhampton five minutes earlier and the latter passes the 4.50 just before Brackhampton.

In all this, do I smell some village scandal of a fruity character? Did you, returning from a shopping spree in town by the 4.50, observe in a passing train the mayor's wife being embraced by the sanitary inspector? But why does it matter which train it was? Thank you for the pullover. Just what I wanted.

Yours ever, David.

Miss Marple smiled a little, then considered the information thus presented to her. Mrs. McGillicuddy had said that the carriage had not been a corridor one. Therefore—not the Swansea express. The 4.33 was indicated.

Some more travelling seemed unavoidable. Miss Marple sighed, but made her plans. She went up to London as before on the 12.15, but this time returned not by the 4.50 but by the 4.33, as far as Brackhampton.

The journey was uneventful, but she registered certain details. The train was not crowded—4.33 was before the evening rush hour. Her carriage had no other occupants.

As the train neared Brackhampton, sweeping around a curve of line, Miss Marple rose to her feet and stood experimentally with her back to the window over which she had drawn down the blind. Yes, she decided, the impetus of the sudden curving of the line and the slackening of speed did throw one off one's balance back against the window and the blind might, in consequence, easily fly up.

Next day she went up by the early morning train. In London she bought a large-scale map of the Brackhampton district, and returned by a train leaving Paddington at twelve-fifteen. Again she was alone in her carriage. About a quarter of an hour before the train was due at Brackhampton, she picked up the map, which she had already studied very carefully, and was soon able to identify where she was as the train slackened for a curve.

It was a very considerable curve indeed. The train was running on a fairly high embankment and Miss Marple studied the ground beneath her with close attention.

That night she wrote and posted a letter addressed to Miss Florence Hill, 4 Madison Road, Brackhampton. The following morning, going to the library, she studied a Brackhampton Directory and Gazetteer, and a County history.

Nothing so far had contradicted the very faint and sketchy idea that had come to her.

But the next step involved action, for which she herself was physically unfit. If her theory were to be

FAME—2

Fame usually comes to those who are thinking about something else.

O. W. Holmes

definitely proved or disproved, she must at this point have help from some other person. The question was—who?

She pondered in growing vexation and perplexity. Then suddenly her forehead cleared.

"Of course!" said Miss Marple. "*Lucy Eyelesbarrow. . . .*"

The name of Lucy Eyelesbarrow had already made itself felt in certain circles. It was quite customary for wives to say joyfully to husbands: "It will be all right. I *can* go with you to the States. I've got Lucy Eyelesbarrow."

The point of Lucy Eyelesbarrow was that, once she came into a house, all worry, anxiety and hard work went out of it. Lucy Eyelesbarrow did everything, saw to everything, arranged everything. She was unbelievably competent in every conceivable sphere.

One of her rules was never to accept an engagement for any long length of time. A fortnight was her usual period. For that fortnight you had to pay the earth. But, during that fortnight, your life was heaven.

Mere riches, though, would not buy you the services of Lucy Eyelesbarrow. She could pick and choose, and she *did* pick and choose.

Lucy Eyelesbarrow read and re-read the letter from Miss Marple. She had made Miss Marple's acquaintance two years ago and had liked the old lady very much. She frowned. She was in reality fully booked up. But her recollection of Miss Marple's personality carried the day and she rang up straightaway explaining that she was at the moment working, but that she was free from two to four on the following afternoon and could meet Miss Marple anywhere in London. She suggested her own club, a rather nondescript establishment which had the advantage of having several small, dark writing rooms which were usually empty.

MISS MARPLE accepted the suggestion and on the following day the meeting took place.

Greetings were exchanged; Lucy Eyelesbarrow led her guest to the gloomiest of the writing rooms, and said: "I'm afraid I'm rather booked up just at present, but perhaps you'll tell me what it is you want me to undertake."

"It's very simple, really," said Miss Marple. "Unusual, but simple. I want you to find a body."

"What kind of body?" asked Lucy Eyelesbarrow, with admirable composure.

"A woman's body," said Miss Marple. "The body of a woman who was murdered—strangled actually—in a train."

Lucy's eyebrows rose slightly. "Well, that's certainly unusual. Tell me about it."

Miss Marple told her. Lucy Eyelesbarrow listened attentively, without interrupting. At the end she said: "You want me to make inquiries—that sort of thing? But won't the police have done all that? Or do you think they have been slack?"

"Oh no," said Miss Marple. "They haven't been slack. It's just that I've got a theory about the woman's body. It's got to be *somewhere*. The railway line makes a big curve before getting into Brackhampton, on the edge of a high embankment. If a body were thrown out there, when the train was leaning at an angle, I *think* it would pitch right down the embankment."

"But surely it would still be found?"

"Oh, yes. It would have to be taken away. . . . But we'll come to that presently. Here's the place—on this map."

Lucy bent to study where Miss Marple's finger pointed.

"It is right in the outskirts of Brackhampton now," said Miss Marple, "but originally it was a country house with extensive park and grounds, and it's still there, untouched—ringed round now with building estates and small suburban houses. It's called Rutherford Hall. It was built by a man called Crackenthorpe, a very rich manufacturer, in 1884. The original Crackenthorpe's son, an elderly man, is living there still, with, I understand, a daughter. The railway encircles quite half of the property."

"And you want me to do—what?"

Miss Marple replied promptly: "I want you to get a post there. Everyone is crying out for domestic help—I should not imagine it would be difficult."

"No, I don't suppose it would."

"I understand that Mr. Crackenthorpe is said locally to be somewhat of a miser. If you accept a low salary, I will make it up to the proper figure, which should, I think, be rather more than the current rate."

"Because of the difficulty?"

"Not the difficulty so much. It might, you know, be *dangerous*. It's only right to warn you of that."

"I don't know," said Lucy pensively, "that the idea of danger would deter me. What do I look for, exactly?"

"Any signs there may be along the

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embankment, a scrap of clothing, broken bushes—that kind of thing. An old maid-servant of mine, my faithful Florence, lives in Brackhampton. She has arranged for me to have rooms with her—I feel I should like to be close at hand. I would suggest that you mention you have an elderly aunt living in the neighbourhood, and that you want a post within easy distance of her. . . ."

Two days later, driving her own small car, Lucy Eyelesbarrow drove through an imposing pair of vast iron gates and up the drive to Rutherford Hall.

The stone steps in front of the door could have done with attention and the gravel sweep was green with neglected weeds. She pulled an old-fashioned wrought iron bell. A slatternly woman, wiping her hands on her apron, opened the door and looked at her suspiciously.

"Expected, aren't you?" she said. "Miss Something-barrow."

"Quite right," said Lucy.

The house was desperately cold inside. Her guide led her along a dark hall and opened a door on the right. Rather to Lucy's surprise, it was quite a pleasant sitting-room, with books and chintz-covered chairs.

"I'll tell her," said the woman, and went away, shutting the door after having given Lucy a look of profound disfavour. After a few minutes the door opened again.

From the first moment Lucy decided that she liked Emma Crackenthorpe. She was aged about forty, a woman with no very outstanding characteristics, neither good-looking nor plain, sensibly dressed in tweeds and pullover, with dark hair swept back from her forehead, steady hazel eyes and a very pleasant voice.

She said: "Miss Eyelesbarrow?" and held out her hand. Then she looked doubtful. "I wonder," she said, "if this post is really what you're looking for? I don't want a housekeeper, you know, to supervise things. I want someone to do the work."

"That's all right," said Lucy. "I'm not at all afraid of work."

"It's a big house, I'm afraid, and inconvenient. Of course, we only live in a portion of it—my father and myself, that is. He is rather an invalid and we live quite quietly. I have several brothers, but they are not here very often. Two women come in, a Mrs. Kidder in the morning, and Mrs. Hart three days a week to do brasses and things like that." Miss Crackenthorpe hesitated. "My father is elderly and a little—difficult sometimes. He is very keen on economy, and he says things that upset people——"

"I'm quite used to elderly people, of all kinds," Lucy broke in quickly.

She was apportioned a large, gloomy bedroom which a small electric heater did its inadequate best to warm, and was shown round the house, a vast, uncomfortable mansion. As they passed a door in the hall, a voice roared out: "That you, Emma? Got the new girl there? I want to look at her."

Emma flushed and glanced at Lucy apologetically. The two women entered the room. It was richly upholstered in dark velvet. The narrow windows let in very little light, and it was full of heavy mahogany Victorian furniture.

Old Mr. Crackenthorpe was stretched out in an invalid chair, a silverheaded stick by his side. He was a big, gaunt man, his flesh hanging in loose folds. He had small, suspicious eyes. "Let's have a look at you, young lady."

Lucy advanced, composed and smiling.

"There's just one thing you'd better understand straight away," Mr. Crackenthorpe said. "Just because we live in a big house, it doesn't mean we're rich. We're *not* rich. We live simply—do you hear? I live here because my father built the house and I like it. After I'm dead they can sell it up if they want to—and I expect they will want to. No sense of family."

Lucy and Emma retired. Lucy asked: "Has Mr. Crackenthorpe been an invalid long?"

Emma said, rather evasively: "Oh, for years now. . . . This is the kitchen."

Lucy asked about times of meals and inspected the larder. Then she said cheerfully: "I know everything now. Don't bother. Leave it all to me."

She rose at six the next morning. She did the house, prepared vegetables, cooked and served breakfast. With Mrs. Kidder she made the beds and at eleven o'clock they sat down to strong tea and biscuits in the kitchen. Mrs. Kidder relaxed into gossip.

"Regular old skinflint *he* is. What she has to put up with! All the same, she's not what I call down-trodden. Can hold her own all right when she has to. When the gentlemen come down, she sees to it there's something decent to eat."

"The gentlemen?"

"Yes. Big family, it was. The eldest, Mr. Edmund, he was killed in the war. Then there's Mr. Cedric, he lives abroad somewhere. He's not married. Paints pictures in foreign parts. Mr. Harold's in the City, lives in London—married an earl's daughter.

"Then there's Mr. Alfred, he's got a nice way with him, but he's a bit of a black sheep, been in trouble once or twice. And there's Miss Edith's husband, Mr. Bryan, ever so nice he is—she died some years ago, but he's always stayed one of the family; and there's Master Alexander, Miss Edith's little boy. He's at school, comes here for part of the holidays always; Miss Emma's terribly set on him."

When Mrs. Kidder departed, Lucy scrubbed the kitchen table and cleaned the silver till it shone. She cooked lunch, cleared away, and at two thirty was ready to start exploration.

She strolled first round the gardens, which would be the normal thing to do. The gardener was a very old man, somewhat deaf, who was only making a show of working. Lucy spoke to him pleasantly. He lived in a cottage adjacent to the big stable yard.

Leading out of the stable yard a back drive led through the park and under a railway arch into a lane. Every few minutes a train thundered along the main line over the railway arch.

Lucy watched the trains as they slackened speed going round the sharp curve that encircled the Crackenthorpe property. She passed under the railway arch and out into the lane. She followed the lane until it came out into a street of small houses. There was a post office at the corner with a telephone box at one side. Lucy walked back to Rutherford Hall.

Next day at last she asked Emma: "I suppose it will be all right if I just practise a few iron shots in the park?"

"Oh, yes, certainly. Are you fond of golf?"

"I'm not much good—but it's a more agreeable form of exercise than just going for a walk."

"Nowhere to walk outside this place," growled Mr. Crackenthorpe. "Nothing but pavements and miserable little bandboxes of houses. They'd like to get hold of my land and build more of them—but they won't until I'm dead. And I'm not going to die to oblige anybody."

"Now, Father," said Emma mildly.

"I know what they think—and what they're waiting for. All of 'em—Cedric, and that sly fox Harold with his smug face. As for Alfred, I wonder he hasn't had a shot at bumping me off himself. Not sure he didn't, at Christmas time. That was a very odd turn I had. Puzzled old Quimper. He asked me a lot of questions."

"Everyone gets these digestive upsets now and again, Father."

Lucy Eyelesbarrow took a light iron out of the set of golf clubs she had had the forethought to bring with her, and strolled out into the park. After five minutes or so a ball, apparently sliced, pitched on the side of the railway embankment. She went up and began to hunt about for it.

During the afternoon she searched about a third of the embankment. Nothing.

Then, on the next day, she came upon something. A thorn bush growing about halfway up the bank had been snapped off. Bits of it lay scattered about.

She examined the bush itself. Impaled on one of the thorns was a torn scrap of fur of a pale brownish colour. She looked at it for a moment, then took a pair of scissors out of her pocket and snipped it carefully in half. The half she had snipped off she put in the envelope she had in her pocket.

She came down the steep slope searching about for anything else. She thought she could distinguish a kind of track which someone had made by walking through the long grass. But it was very faint.

She began to hunt carefully down in the grass at the foot of the embankment just below the broken thorn bush. Presently her search was rewarded. She found a powder compact, a small, cheap, enamelled affair. She wrapped it in her handkerchief and put it in her pocket. She searched on but did not find anything more.

On the following afternoon, she got into her car and went to see her invalid aunt. . . .

The house where Miss Marple was staying was small and drab, in a small drab street. It had very clean Nottingham lace curtains, a shining white doorstep and a well-polished brass door handle. The door was opened by a tall, grim-looking woman, dressed in black. She eyed Lucy in suspicious appraisal as she showed her in to Miss Marple.

Miss Marple was occupying the back sitting-room, which looked out on to a small, tidy square of garden. Lucy sat down in the chair facing her. "Well!" she said. "It looks as though you were right." She produced her finds and gave the details of their finding.

A faint flush of achievement came into Miss Marple's cheeks. "Perhaps one ought not to feel so," she said, "but it *is* rather gratifying to form a theory and get proof that it is correct." She fingered the small tuft of fur. "Elspeth said the woman was wearing a light-coloured fur coat. I suppose the compact was in the pocket of the coat and fell out as the body rolled down the slope. It doesn't seem distinctive in any way, but it may help. You didn't take all the fur?"

"No, I left half of it on the bush."

Miss Marple nodded approval. "Quite right. You are very intelligent, my dear. The police will want to check exactly."

"You are going to the police?"

"Well—not quite yet. . . ." Miss Marple considered. "It would be better, I think, to find the body first. Don't you?"

"Yes, but isn't that rather a tall order? I mean, granting that your estimate is correct, the murderer pushed the body out of the train, then presumably got out himself at Brackhampton and at some time—probably that same night—came along and removed the body. But what happened after that? He may have taken it *anywhere*."

"Not *anywhere*," said Miss Marple. "Because, if so, he might much more easily have killed the girl in some lonely spot and driven the body away. You haven't appreciated—"

Lucy interrupted. "Are you saying—do you mean—that this was a premeditated crime?"

"I didn't think so at first," said Miss Marple. "One wouldn't—naturally. It seemed like a quarrel and a man losing control and strangling the girl and then being faced with the problem of disposing of his victim. But it really is too much of a coincidence that he should kill the girl in a fit of passion, and then look out of the window and find the train was going round a curve exactly at a spot where he could tip the body out, *and* where he could be sure of finding his way later and removing it."

She paused. Lucy stared at her.

"You know," said Miss Marple thoughtfully, "it's really quite a clever way to have planned a crime—and I think it was very carefully planned. He knew—he *must* have known—all about Rutherford Hall. Its geographical position, I mean. And I don't think he would take the body away from Rutherford Hall, or not very far. The obvious thing, I suppose, would be to bury it somewhere?"

"I suppose so," said Lucy considering. "But it wouldn't be quite as easy as it sounds."

Miss Marple agreed. "He couldn't bury it in the park. Too hard work and very noticeable. Somewhere where the earth was turned already?"

"The kitchen garden, perhaps, but that's very close to the gardener's


# WHY?

MRS. GREEN was a newcomer to the quiet country town of Ditchton. But within a few weeks malicious rumours began to be heard among the local residents that she had had a dress shop in London, that something had gone wrong and that she had had to retire suddenly to the country to escape her creditors.

When Mrs. Green, who had never had a dress shop or been in business, heard of the rumours, she was so upset that she became ill.

Eventually, she discovered who had instigated the stories, and she sued for slander. "I admit I spread the rumours and I agree that they are untrue," said the scandalmonger when she gave evidence in the witness box.

But Mrs. Green still lost her case.

**WHY?** *A barrister explains the judge's ruling on page 51*


FAME—3

The longer a man's fame is likely to last, the later it will be in coming.

Schopenhauer

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cottage. He's old and deaf, but it still might be risky."

"Then in a shed, perhaps, or an outhouse?"

"That would be simpler and quicker. There are a lot of unused old buildings. Or he might perhaps thrust it into a clump of rhododendrons or shrubs somewhere."

Miss Marple nodded. "Yes, I think that's much more probable. . . ."

Lucy set to work systematically the next afternoon. She poked round outhouses, prodded the briars which wreathed the old pigsties, and was peering into the boiler-room under the greenhouse when she heard a dry cough and turned to find old Hillman, the gardener, looking at her disapprovingly.

"You be careful you don't get a nasty fall, miss," he warned her. "Them steps isn't safe, and you was up in the loft just now and the floor there ain't safe neither."

Lucy was careful to display no embarrassment. "I expect you think I'm very nosy," she said cheerfully. "I was just wondering if something couldn't be made out of this place—growing mushrooms for the market, that sort of thing. Everything seems to have been let go terribly."

"That's the master, that is. Won't spend a penny. Ought to have two men and a boy here, I ought, to keep the place proper, but won't hear of it, he won't."

"But if the place could be made to pay—with some repairs?"

"Won't get a place like this to pay—too far gone. And he wouldn't care about that, anyway. Only cares about saving. Knows well enough what'll happen after he's gone—the young gentlemen'll sell up as fast as they can. Going to come into a tidy lot of money when he dies, so I've heard."

"I suppose he's a very rich man?"

"Crackenthorpe's Fancies, that's what they are. The old gentleman started it, Mr. Crackenthorpe's father. A sharp one he was, by all accounts. Made his fortune, and built this place. Disappointed in both his sons, so the story goes. Give 'em an education and brought 'em up to be gentlemen—Oxford and all.

"But they were too much of gentlemen to want to go into the business. The younger one married an actress and then smashed himself up in a car accident when he'd been drinking. The elder one, our one here, his father never fancied so much. Abroad a lot, he was, bought a lot of heathen statues and had them sent home. Wasn't so close with his money when he was young—come on him more in middle age, it did. No, they never did hit it off, him and his father, so I've heard."

"I don't know what to say—I like them all"

Lucy digested this information with an air of polite interest.

"Died in nineteen twenty-eight, the old gentleman did. Terrible temper he had. Didn't do to give him any sauce. He wouldn't stand for it."

"And after he died, this Mr. Crackenthorpe came and lived here?"

"Him and his family, yes. Nigh to grown up they was by then."

Lucy said: "Well—I expect you'll be wanting to go on with your work. You mustn't let me keep you."

She went back to the house, where she found Emma Crackenthorpe standing in the hall reading a letter. The afternoon post had just been delivered. "My nephew will be here tomorrow—with a school friend," Emma said. "Alexander's room is the one over the porch. The one next to it will do for James Stoddart-West."

"Yes, Miss Crackenthorpe. I'll see the rooms are prepared. . . ."

The two boys arrived the following morning. They both had well-brushed hair, suspiciously angelic faces, and perfect manners. Alexander Eastley had fair hair and blue eyes; Stoddart-West was dark and spectacled.

After she had cleared away and washed up lunch, Lucy went out. She could hear the boys calling out in the distance on the lawn. She herself went in the opposite direction, down the front drive and from there she struck across to some clumped masses of rhododendron bushes. She began to hunt carefully. She was raking inside one clump with a golf club when the polite voice of Alexander Eastley made her start.

"Are you looking for something, Miss Eyelesbarrow?"

"A golf ball," said Lucy promptly. "Several golf balls in fact. I've been practising golf shots most afternoons and I've lost quite a lot of balls."

"We'll help you," said Alexander.

"That's very kind of you. I thought you were playing football."

"One can't go *on* playing footer," explained Stoddart-West. "One gets too hot."

"I say, there's a clock golf set under the stairs," Alexander said. "We could fix it up on the lawn."

Encouraged by Lucy, they went off to get the clock golf set. Later, she found them setting it out on the lawn.

"It's a pity the numbers are so rusty," said Stoddart-West. "You can hardly see them."

"They need a lick of white paint," said Lucy. "You might get some."

"Good idea!" Alexander's face lit up. "I say, I believe there are some old pots of paint in the Long Barn—left there by the painters last hols."

"What's the Long Barn?" asked Lucy.

Alexander pointed to a long stone building a little way from the house near the back drive. "A lot of grandfather's collection is in the barn," he said. "Things he had sent home from abroad when he was a young man. Most of them are pretty frightful. Come and see."

There was a big oak nailstudded door to the barn. Alexander raised his hand and took a key off a nail under some ivy, turned it in the lock, and pushed the door open. They went in.

At a first glance Lucy felt that she was in a singularly bad museum. The heads of two Roman emperors in marble glared at her out of bulging eyeballs; there was a huge sarcophagus of a decadent Greco-Roman period; a simpering Venus stood on a pedestal clutching her falling draperies. Beside these there were sundry oddments.

"I think I saw the paint over here," said Alexander vaguely. He went to a corner and pulled aside a curtain. They found a couple of paint pots and brushes, the latter dry and stiff.

"You need some turps," said Lucy.

They could not, however, find any turpentine. The boys suggested bicycling off to get some, and Lucy urged them to do so. Painting the clock golf numbers would keep them amused for some time, she thought.

She stood looking round her after the boys had gone. Her eyes came to rest on the sarcophagus and stayed there.

That sarcophagus. . . .

The air in the barn was faintly musty, as though unaired for a long time. She went over to the sarcophagus. It had a heavy, close-fitting lid. She looked at it speculatively.

Then she left the barn, found a heavy crowbar, and returned.

It was not an easy task, but she toiled doggedly. Slowly the lid of the sarcophagus began to rise, prised up by the crowbar.

It rose sufficiently for Lucy to see what was inside.

*To be continued next week*

*"4.50 From Paddington" will be published as a book by Collins on November 4 at 15s.*

## Way of the country

*Continued from page 30*

leopard didn't strike. He was playing with them: waiting for the moment when he'd polish them off as a man would squash a fly.

Clem ran forward, brandishing his stake and shouting to the dogs: "Come off it, Rufus! Vicky, get away!"

If they'd only obey, and all three beat a flying retreat. . . .

He didn't see the leopard grip the branch and tense his muscles for the spring. He looked up just in time to see a yellow thunderbolt hurtling down at him from a blinding sky: and just in time, in the fraction of a fraction of a second, he flung himself forward and towards the tree. Something struck him violently, knocked him down and almost winded him: but the tree-trunk broke his fall. Only one conscious thought possessed him—to hang on to the fencing stake as if to life itself. It was his one chance.

He spun round, stake in hand, and swung it blindly, with every ounce of strength he had, against the burst of fanged fury that was coming at him like a rocket. He had no time to think, aim, or even to be frightened: his was a swift, instinctive lashing out against destruction.

The fencing post seemed to take control of his arms. There was a thwack like something bursting, a paralysing jar across his shoulders and down his wrists, and the stake was lifted out of his hands.

It was all over in a split second. The heavy fencing post had caught the creature on the side of the head as it sprang. For a vital moment it knocked the leopard out. But Clem saw that it was only stunned, not dead.

The stake lay on the ground. Clem moved to seize it as the leopard moved to summon his strength. The stake felt like a ton of lead. He saw the leopard's fangs bared as he raised it shoulder-high. *I'll never make it*, he thought.

There was a yelp, a snarl, a flurry of white and amber, and the outline of the leopard dissolved into a whirlpool of fur, fangs and flying limbs. The dogs were on him. With sick distress, Clem saw a grey ball fly through the air as the leopard lashed out. Gripping the stake, he brought it down again and again, between those flat black ears, and burning yellow eyes.

The leopard turned to him, flailing with its tail, then back to Rufus, who had fastened teeth into its leg. Clem heard the steel-trap jaws clash together as he struck and this time he got the frantic beast fair and square between the ears. The post came down like a sledge-hammer and it cracked the leopard's skull. The beast went down like a sawn tree and stayed down. The yellow fire went out of the eyes; the lips fell back over the fangs; all the muscles softened under the satiny skin.

Clem leaned on the stake, panting, and nearly cried. This was the most beautiful thing he'd ever seen and it was dead by his hand.

He became suddenly aware of cries. Pip Morgan was first there, with old Manvi close behind him and the now unwanted gun in his hand.

Morgan took in the scene and for once in his life he was speechless. Then Harriet came and flung her arms round Clem and cried with anxiety and relief.

"We heard the dogs," she gasped. "We knew something was wrong . . . I was so afraid. . . ."

"Never in my life," Pip Morgan said, "have I heard of anything like it. To kill an angry leopard with a fencing post. . . ." There was admiration as well as astonishment in his voice.

But Clem didn't feel a bit like a hero. He hadn't in the least wanted to kill the leopard. Left to itself, it would have done no harm. If only Rufus and Vicky hadn't disturbed it, it would still have been alive.

"Bwana," Manvi said in the language Clem was struggling to learn, "you are a brave man. To kill a leopard without a gun—that is something no one has done since the long-ago days when our warriors hunted them for their pelts which only chiefs could wear, for leopards were royal game. Now I shall show you a place on your farm where there is salt for your cattle to eat, and a tree where the bees always make rich honey."

Clem smiled at Manvi.

"Congratulations, old man," Pip Morgan said, with genuine warmth. "You know, this is going to make you famous. Anyone can drop a leopard with a good rifle. But a fencing post. . . ."

"Oh, well," said Clem, "you see, there was a lot at stake." He hoped the feeble pun would cover up the fact that his muscles had mysteriously turned to jelly and that his hand was shaking like a winnowing machine.

Perhaps Harriet spotted his trouble. At any rate his hand shook less when she clasped it in hers. THE END

## WHY?

*See page 49*

BECAUSE, said the judge, in most cases a person complaining of slander must prove that it has caused her to suffer damage. Although the scandal-monger's slanders had made Mrs. Green ill, that was not, in law, "damage." It had to be financial damage. Illness, however severe, was not enough.

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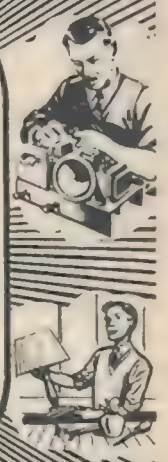

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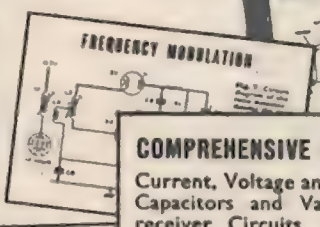


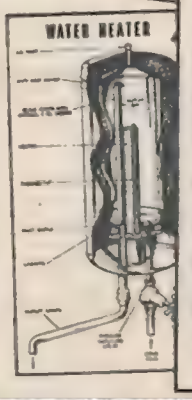


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## The sledge patrol

*Continued from page 21*

Danes at Eskimoness were beginning to feel secure. The Eskimos, on the other hand, got more and more alarmed; for whereas the Danes understood what the war was about, the whole conception of war was a mystery to the Eskimos. Poulsen knew he could not expect them to take any part in defending the station, and, anyhow, he had been told not to get them mixed up in fighting; and so he sent two of the Eskimos, Aparte and Mikael, away with their sledges to Ella Island. He asked them to tell any of the men who happened to be there to come north as reinforcements.

Kurt Olsen had come back from his trip to Hold With Hope, and so there was only one man in the northern section of the patrol who had not yet been warned what was happening; and that was Peter Nielsen. Marius and Poulsen were both worried about Peter.

"He might come south and run into Sabine Island alone, from the opposite direction," said Poulsen.

"The only way to stop him is to go up north and try to find him," said Marius.

Poulsen pondered on this. At last he agreed. "You and Eli Knudsen go to look for Peter."

As they were short of dogs, the teams were divided to give Marius enough to travel with.

Poulsen gave strict orders to him and Eli. "You can go north the usual way," he said, "by Sandodden and the Kuppel Pass. But be careful of the huts. Don't go near them without driving round them first to make sure there aren't any tracks."

He told them to come back by a different pass farther inland across Wollaston Foreland, and round the west side of Clavering Island. It was a longer route and a more difficult pass to cross, but it was farther from Sabine Island.

To the Eskimos, Evald and William, Poulsen said: "We have two dog teams left. Take one of the teams and keep it well out of sight of the house. If anything happens, you are to harness the team at once, drive over to the shore, and wait." He fixed a definite rendezvous point.

"If you think it is too dangerous to wait there," he added, "drive to the hut on the other side of the bay"—it was about twelve miles off. "If you don't feel safe even there, you can go on to Ella Island."

The Europeans also had their action stations. Poulsen's was in front of the house, Rudi's in a sandbagged post to the west of it, and Kurt Olsen's about fifty yards away to the east on top of a little rise. . . .

At eleven o'clock on the evening of March 23, Kurt Olsen was starting the weather broadcast, and Poulsen was standing in the hut in his shirt sleeves, when Henry Rudi put his head in at the door.

"Poulsen!" he shouted. "Poulsen! I think there's somebody on the ice."

Poulsen snatched up his rifle.

"Kurt!" he called. "Outside!"

"I'm just starting the report," Kurt Olsen answered.

"Get to your post," Poulsen shouted over his shoulder. He ran to the door.

Outside, it was pitch dark, for the sky was overcast. Everything was as silent as ever. Rudi had gone. Poulsen stood alone and listened. The dogs were stirring. And then, out on the ice beyond the shore, he heard a stealthy movement.

"Who's there?" he shouted.

The movement stopped. The dogs began to howl. Then from the darkness a voice shouted in broken Danish, "Who are you?"

That answer told Poulsen everything. "What do you want here?" he asked in German, and there was another silence.

"I want to speak to Herr Poulsen," the voice replied.

Poulsen was astonished and shaken to hear his own name. A defensive instinct told him not to give himself away.

"You can't talk to him tonight," he shouted. "You can come back in the daylight."

He stood there tense with his finger on the trigger, trying to catch a glimpse of his opponent, but the voice came to him disembodied from the vague greyness of the ice.

"Can I speak to Herr Olsen or Herr Rudi?" it asked.

Poulsen's thoughts were racing ahead of his words. The Germans knew exactly who was at the station; then they must have broken the ciphers.

He heard movements again and shouted: "Get back from the beach."

"I must speak to Herr Poulsen, or else Herr Rudi or Herr Olsen," the voice insisted.

"One man can come across the beach," Poulsen said. "Unarmed!"

The voice said: "Do you intend to offer armed resistance?"

"Yes," Poulsen shouted; and at that word machine gun fire burst out and tracer bullets flew at him from the ice. He fired towards the muzzle-flashes a hundred yards away, but it was so dark he could not see the sights of his rifle, and the flashes from his own gun seemed to draw the fire down on him. He jumped into cover behind a packing case full of ice and as he went down bullets smacked into it.

He ran round the house to try to find the others and met Henry Rudi standing there. Another burst of fire came overhead, and he pushed Rudi down and went on to look for Olsen. A concentration of bullets was pouring over Olsen's post. Poulsen shouted to him but there was no answer. He turned back towards the house and got a clear sight of the flash of a machine gun again, and he shot at it.

Rudi had disappeared. The hammering of the machine guns and the criss-cross of bullets confused Poulsen so that he could not tell which side the Germans were coming from, and he thought that he was surrounded.

He went back for Olsen, but his post was still under fire.

"Olsen!" he shouted, "Olsen!"

There was no answer.

Poulsen could not find anyone or do anything more, and if he stayed where he was for another few seconds he was going to be killed or captured; so he ran across the level behind the house, still under fire, and went a little way up the hill beyond it.

There he stopped to look back. Most of the firing died away, and only one gun went on in occasional bursts from the eastward. He began to be conscious of something else; the cold.

In less than ten minutes the house had been lost and everything that was in it. His men were dead or scattered. He was still wearing only a shirt and trousers and a pair of sealskin boots which he had used as bedroom slippers. There were approximately forty-five degrees of frost, and the nearest help was at Ella Island, 150 miles away. . . .

Ritter was sick at heart. He had not been able to understand exactly what the man in front of the house had been saying, either because of the distance and the noise the dogs were making, or because they were both speaking a mixture of Danish and German.

The only thing he had heard perfectly clearly was the other man's answer when he had asked if he meant to resist. It had dashed Ritter's hopes of more or less peaceful persuasion, and he had squeezed the trigger at once. That was his second plan: to shoot over their heads, to show the Danes what they were up against and frighten them into surrender.

But that had gone wrong. When the five men he had brought with him had taken up the shooting, he had seen they were firing low and hitting the house and sweeping the ground outside it. Whether they meant to or not, they were shooting to kill. Even while his finger was on the trigger, his conscience and his military self were still at war.

Before the firing stopped, Ritter began to advance alone, over the shore-ice and up the gentle slope towards the house, carrying his hot machine gun in his hand. He did not care in the least by then what happened to him. Let the Danes shoot if they were still alive: he wanted them to be alive, not dead.

He walked straight to the door and threw it open. It was dark inside. He flashed his torch round the room, found the electric light switch and turned it on.

Almost the first thing he saw was the signal from Eske Brun, still hanging where Poulsen had pinned it to the wall: "Eliminate enemy forces by capture or shooting. Take no chances but shoot first." There was no compromise there, no possible hint of a peaceful solution.

Ritter felt that he could only play for safety and put Eskimoness out of action once and for all. Yet he did not want to do it.

In the end he decided to wait, to give the Danes a fair chance to come back if they were still in hiding in the hills; and he decided to leave one small outhouse standing. To some extent that salved his Arctic conscience. If any traveller happened to come along when he had gone, depending on Eskimoness for rest or shelter in a storm, the smallest of the huts would be enough to save his life; but on the other hand it would be no use at all to a military force of the size the Danes would need for a counter-attack on Hansa Bay.

So Ritter and his men stayed there for two days.

Ritter collected all the personal possessions of the Danes, including the furs, and put them in the little hut which had been used for curing skins.

As a symbol, he also hauled down the Danish flag and folded it up and put it with the furs; and then he wrote a message and nailed it up inside the little hut:

> The U.S.A. protects its defence interests here in Greenland. We do the same. We are not at war with Denmark. But your governor has given orders to capture or shoot us, and you are giving weather reports to the enemy. You are therefore making Greenland a theatre of war. We have stayed quietly at our post without attacking you. But if you want war you shall have war. Note that we have put all personal property of your hunters and all furs in

# A MEAL TO REMEMBER

**by Gracie Fields**

During my first visit to England after I had married my late husband, Monty Banks, in America, we entertained my family to a reunion dinner. I had planned an elaborate menu, but Monty, whose cooking abilities I had been highly praising, suggested that we should give our guests one of his famous spaghetti specialities.

I was a little dubious, as I knew that he could take an hour or so making a sauce, but I kept our guests entertained while Monty disappeared into the kitchen. I kept popping my head round the door hoping to see the dish ready, but when, after an hour, I caught Monty guiltily hiding a saucepan in the cupboard, I knew that the first attempt had been a failure.

We all grew rapidly hungrier and my efforts to be entertaining became more and more feeble. After nearly two hours I marched boldly into the kitchen and, ignoring the piles of used saucepans, said to the harassed chef: "It doesn't matter what it's like, bring it in—we're starving."

Eventually a rather disgruntled Monty emerged with a huge, steaming bowl. It was a spaghetti dish topped with chicken, a sauce and grated Parmesan cheese browned under a grill. I hastily served the portions and naturally served Monty last.

He took one mouthful, sprang to his feet and said: "This is terrible. You must all wait and I will try again."

Shocked into silence, we watched helplessly as he whisked our plates off the table and disappeared into the kitchen.

Of course, all our guests insisted that they did not mind, and we played the piano and I sang some more songs. Several hours later (or so it seemed) a second dish of spaghetti arrived, brought in by a beaming Monty. This time we all held firmly on to our plates.

The spaghetti was excellent and our guests politely said that it was well worth waiting for, but by that time I was almost too exhausted to eat it.

### *Here is a recipe for spaghetti alla Tetrazzini*

Always start the sauce before the spaghetti, which should be cooked in boiling salted water for about twelve minutes (slightly undercooked spaghetti is best for this dish).

Toss the spaghetti in melted butter and cheese and then spread over the top pieces of already cooked, cold breast of chicken.

For the Béchamel sauce: 3 oz. butter, two tablespoons of flour, about one cup chicken stock or milk, a little cream, seasoning.

Warm the butter in a pan until it just begins to brown, then stir in the flour and cook for about two minutes until it turns a golden colour (keep stirring all the time over a low light or the flour will burn).

Add the chicken stock or milk (be careful not to add too much or the sauce will be too thin) and simmer for a few minutes. Then add the cream and seasoning and cook until the sauce is fairly thick, *but not too thick*.

Pour the sauce over the spaghetti and chicken and sprinkle the top with grated Parmesan cheese. Put under a hot grill until the cheese begins to brown and serve immediately.

this hut, while we have destroyed the radio apparatus operating for the U.S.A.

signed: H. Ritter,
Commander of the Wehrmacht Unit.

But it was nearly six months before this note was found, and it never came into the hands of the sledge patrol.

After they had finished these preparations, Ritter and his party smashed the radio, shot some of the dogs because they could not take all of them away, and poured petrol in the wooden house and set it on fire. It blazed furiously, and soon there was nothing of Eskimoness left except its ashes, glowing in a pit which the heat had melted in the snow. . . .

IF Ritter had known exactly what had happened to Poulsen, he would have had a good reason for feeling remorseful, because nobody, on that night of March 23, could have said that Poulsen had any reasonable chance at all of saving his own life, except by going back to the house and trusting himself to the mercy of the Germans.

Forty-five degrees of frost is not cold for a Greenland night in March; but it is more than cold enough to start frostbite.

Poulsen, standing on the hillside above Eskimoness that night, in his shirt and trousers and his skin shoes with no socks inside them, had no protection against frostbite, and he knew it. But he did not go back to the house. In his absurdly inadequate clothes, he turned away from his captured home and began to walk, although he knew that nobody in the history of the Arctic had done such a foolish thing before, and that in all foreseeable probability he was starting a journey which would end in his death or make him a scarred and helpless cripple.

He went to the cache he had laid in the hills. It contained tents and sleeping bags and food; but when he had laid it, he had never thought of anyone leaving the house in such a hurry that he would have to go without his clothes, and so he had not left any there. He was very cold already.

A tent was no use to him, because he had no sledge and a tent was too heavy to carry; so he cut one up into pieces with his knife. He wrapped a large piece round him like a cloak, with a flap of it over his head, and he tied it in place with some bits of the guy ropes; and he took two smaller pieces and wrapped his hands in them, tying them round his wrists with difficulty because his hands were already getting numb. He took a sleeping bag and put some food in it, and rolled it up and hoisted it on his back.

His first objective was Henry Rudi's hut at Revet. Revet was no use as a permanent refuge. There were no stores or equipment there. Ella Island, two hundred miles away on foot, was the only place where he could equip himself again and make a fresh start in the fight; but he had not had time to think of any possible way of getting to Ella Island, and had not yet admitted to himself that he might simply have to walk there.

It was thirty-five miles to Revet. In the early dawn he stopped at a hunting hut and found some food, and then, in case the Germans came to search the hut, he climbed a little way up the mountains at the back of it, and found a sheltered gully, and spread his sleeping bag on the snow and got wearily into it, to sleep the daylight through. At dusk he got up and walked on.

That second night's walk can only have been agony. Sharp edges of ice and rocks along the shore cut his feet through the soft thin skin of his shoes. The first stages of frost-bite showed themselves in his hands and face and ears and feet. He could not have walked very far that night before he fell down and died.

Luckily it was only twenty-three miles to Revet from the place where he had slept; and he had been perfectly fit before he got frozen and would normally have walked that distance without thinking twice about it.

But that night, when at last he

reached the hut, and warmth and a temporary safety seemed to be in his grasp, he was so exhausted and his hands were so badly frozen that he could not move his fingers to turn the door knob.

For some minutes, while he struggled to open the door, he had to face the irony of dying there on the very doorstep, because if he could not get in, he was much too far gone to reach any other hut.

He went down on his knees in the end, and got hold of the knob between his wrists; and at long last he turned it, and crawled inside.

The stove was warm. Somebody had been there, and only gone that night. In the dark, Poulsen held his frozen hands against the stove and felt the searing pain come into them as they thawed. As soon as he could move

FAME—4

Fame is the advantage of being known by people of whom you yourself know nothing, and for whom you care as little.

Stanislaus I, King of Poland

them, he fumbled round for matches, and lit the fire which was laid, and the paraffin lamp; and then he saw a scribbled note which was lying on the table:

> Don't go to Eskimoness. Germans have captured it. Think Poulsen was killed. We others all right.
> Olsen. Rudi.

That took a weight off his mind. It even made him smile; and before he left the hut, he crossed out the words "Think Poulsen was killed," and wrote at the bottom: "Am O.K."

But, in fact, he was only "O.K." in the sense that he was not dead yet. He had patches of first degree frostbite all over him, and he was very tired and his feet were very sore. But the worst of it was that he knew quite well that his difficulties had only just begun.

He ate, and thawed himself. He scrounged round the hut and its loft, and, as he had hoped, he found a few dirty old worn-out clothes, including an anorak and a pair of boots; and then, because he was still only half a day's sledge journey away from the Germans, and Revet was one of the most likely places for them to look for him, he took the sleeping bag up into the hills and slept in the snow again.

That evening when he woke up again he felt a lot better, and he was able to look squarely at the fact that he would have to try to walk to Ella just as he was, without any equipment at all. The most urgent thing was to get to Ella and use the radio there to report what had happened to Eske Brun.

Shortly before it was dark on March 25, at the end of the second day after the attack, he went down again to Henry Rudi's hut to look for anything else which might be useful on the journey. The boots he had found were much too big for him, and he still had no socks. But there were plenty of old sacks which had been used for coal and flour, so he cut up sacks and made them into stockings as well as he could, tying the loose ends round his legs.

He found an old pair of skis and took some matches. Rather than take any of the cooking utensils which belonged to the hut, he chose an empty meat tin so that he would be sure to have something to melt snow in on the way. He could have worn the skis, but they would not have helped him much on the hard fiord ice, and he would have had to carry the sleeping bag and the tin and the remains of his food; so instead, he fastened the skis together, and wrapped the tin and the food in the sleeping bag and lashed it on the skis so that he could tow the whole lot behind him like a sledge. So he had nothing to carry except his rifle.

He fastened a string to the front of the skis and tied it round his waist, and went down on to the ice and turned south, with two hundred miles of mountain and fiord ahead of him.

Through the whole of the first fifty miles, he expected to meet the Germans, and he also expected a blizzard. If the weather had broken that night, there would not have been anything left for him to do except to die as gracefully as he could.

But the weather held, and the Germans were not to be seen. He walked on and on across the open ice throughout the night; his breath hanging in a cloud on the quiet air and turning to ice in the stubble of his beard and the rim of the hood of his borrowed anorak.

Once he was in Loch Fyne, he felt more secure. There were hunting huts there, one at the mouth and one at the head and one half way. It was twelve miles from hut to hut.

He walked on right to the head of the fiord, with only short rests in the huts on the way. At the end of a night and a day and half of another night the first fifty miles of the journey were behind him.

Besides food, the thing that was troubling him most by then was the state of his feet. The sacks they were wrapped in were hard and coarse, and the absurdly big boots, whatever he did with them, rubbed up and down at every step. When at last he came to the hut at the head of the fiord and had lighted the stove and got some warmth in the place, he unwrapped his feet and found a disgusting mess, the toes and heels raw and bleeding, and dirt and fibres from the sacks ground into the open sores.

He melted some snow in the tin and washed his feet in it, and then melted more snow in the same tin and drank it: it was no time to be fastidious.

From the head of Loch Fyne he turned west overland to the head of Musk Ox Fiord.

Before he had reached the low watershed between the fiords, he had realized that something was wrong with him, and that his usual strength appeared to have ebbed away; but it was some time later before he realized why. He was getting weaker simply because he was hungry. It was five days since he had had anything that could be called a decent meal. For the last two days, he had been spinning out the remains of some oatmeal he had found in a hut in Loch Fyne, and drinking warm water.

That afternoon, he reached the first hut in Musk Ox Fiord. He had only gone fifteen miles, but he could not go any farther; and that short day's march had made him admit to himself that he must get food, however long it took him to find it, because without enough to eat, in the bitter cold, he would never get to Ella Island at all.

SOMETIMES a man has a stroke of luck which he remembers all his life, and Poulsen never forgot that hut. It was just the same as all the others, as small and bare and sparsely furnished as any kind of human lair could be; but on a shelf in it, forgotten, he found a packet of beans. They had certainly been there for three years, and probably very much longer, but they had been frozen for three-quarters of every year, and they were still recognizable as beans.

It might be too much to say that those beans saved Poulsen's life, but at least they made him feel well-fed that evening, and there were enough to take him the forty long, tedious miles down Musk Ox Fiord in the next two days.

At the mouth of the fiord, he got back into better country, with hard ice underfoot, among the head waters of Kaiser Franz Joseph Fiord.

On the far side of the fiord there is a hut; and it had been well stocked with food when Poulsen had last been down that way. It was still the same; and when he got there, he had no more fear of going hungry. He sat down to an orgy of tinned meat and oatmeal and coffee.

Beyond that hut, his walk took a better turn. He was still getting weaker day by day, and the sores on his feet were deeper every evening when he washed them. But beyond a certain degree, the pain of raw feet cannot get very much worse.

Somewhere he stalked a musk ox. He was ashamed to kill the great beast just to satisfy himself, but he thought that fresh meat would give him more stamina. He ate a little raw, and took a few pieces with him, and left the carcass.

On April 4, in the evening, he came within sight of the bastion of Ella Island, a vast rock which rises behind the station there; and as he got nearer he walked out on the middle of the ice, in the hope that someone would see him and come out with a sledge to help him.

He had walked 230 miles in eleven days and now the last five miles seemed more than he could possibly accomplish.

*NEXT WEEK: The sledge patrol drives into a German trap*

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**POST YOUR COUPON AND GIFT LABEL by MONDAY, OCTOBER 14**

## STUDY THESE GOLDEN WORDS

"BULLETS" No. 2,106 RESULT—FIRST PRIZE, £300 (or, if Tournament winner, £1,000 Award as offered): R. Fletcher, 2 Lea Road, Southall, Middlesex:

**At The Church Door—Weary? Turn In!**

£25: W. L. Hoole, 33 Sydenham Villas Road, Cheltenham: His Income—Never *His*—Never-never Hits!

£10: J. C. Smith, 23 Second Avenue, Wickford: Inflation, The Wolf—Design For Threepenny Stamp?

OTHER AWARDS. £9: M. Thomas, 45 Milford Road, Haverfordwest: Skill—Opportunity "Plays Ball" With! £8: C. W. Bundy, 30 Fulbrook Road, London, N.19: On The Brink Of Tragedy—Toddler—Teapot On *Edge*. £7: Mrs. O. Beaumont, 30 Windermere Road, Hyde, Cheshire: Should Challenge More—Range Of *Production* "Peaks." £6: G. McKinnie, "Flodene," 329 Kingsway, Hove: To Pay The Rent—Easy—It's Paid *First*! £5: J. Beard, 34 Kent Road, St. Helens, Lancs: Shadow Over Our—Avenue—The Joneses' *Plane*! £5: W. Gerrard, 27 Mereland Way, St. Helens, Lancs: Weaker And Weaker—"Signals" From "Submerged" Hungary. £5: A. W. Maskell, 36 Sandy Hill Road, London, S.E.18: In The Autumn Of Life—Hope I've *Granny's* "Nippiness."

1,610 other awards have also been posted. (Tournament winner will be announced in earliest possible issue.)

## THIS WAY TO WIN

HERE'S how to shape a Bullet. First, grasp the broad idea by enjoying the latest winners. Then choose as your starting-point any Example from list below. To it, add TWO, THREE or FOUR words to make the whole into a bright Bullet.

| | |
|---|---|
| World To Aim At | Let's Pull Up Our Socks And |
| Lest We Forget | Torn Apart |
| Sailor Charles | That Guy We Elected |
| Uneasy Peace | In Top Gear |
| The Right Idea | Mother's Work |
| Mr. Rising Price | It's Bonfire Night, So |
| At The Eleventh Hour | Key To The Mystery |
| The Communist Germ | Daring |
| Something Cruel | Big—Bigger—Biggest |
| Village Schoolmaster | When The Wind Howls |

Last six Examples are incomplete: if you wish to use one, first complete it with a word of your choice—then make your Bullet as above.

| | |
|---|---|
| Fireworks At ..... | .....The Shop-steward |
| The Unknown..... | Treasure Of A..... |
| With.....At The Helm | If.....Lived Today |

**RULES** 1. First prize for best Bullet received. Others in order of merit; the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all Bullets received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover Bullets in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed at 6d. per Bullet. Make P.O. payable to John Bull, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that result of this Contest (in John Bull dated November 9), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, October 26, for early news of Bullets No. 2,111 result.)

**ADDRESS ENTRY:** Bullets 2,111, "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.99

## USE THIS COUPON to WIN the TREASURE CHEST

EXAMPLE ..... 6d. PER "BULLET"

BULLET _____

EX. .....

B. _____

EX. .....

B. _____

EX. .....

B. _____

EX. .....

B. _____

### EXTRA OPPORTUNITY—3 Bullets for 1s. ONLY

EX. .....

B _____

EX. .....

B. _____

EX. .....

B. _____

**2,111** Closing Postmark **MON., OCT. 14**

I agree to rules and enclose P.O. entry-fee at the rate of 6d. per Bullet or 3s. 6d. for complete coupon.

P.O. value..... No.....

Signed.....

Address.....

.....

To receive Prize Offer details and coupons for next three contests **FREE** mark X here.....

## GET YOUR £100 XMAS SHOPPING VOUCHERS

To qualify for Presentation of £100 Christmas Shopping Vouchers, enter coupon on right bearing 5 or more Bullets for Contest No. 2,111 and enclose this fully completed Gift Label.

(Not more than one set allowed to each entrant.)

Name..... .....

Address..... .....

.....

.....

**YOU MUST AFFIX 3d. in STAMPS here for POSTAGE**

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**ON SALE WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 9**

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What is the difference between an Archipelago and an Atoll.

Which animals are regarded as untameable. ?

What is chromium.

What is the cause of pins and needles in the limbs. ?

What causes the tides.

Who was Damocles. ?

What is voting by ballot.

Why does a railway engine puff . . . ?

## *Do you know the answers?*

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*Name* .....

*Address* .....

.....

*Signature* ..... P.K.1x